




3 1761 11631132 5



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/31761116311325>

CA26N
x1
-D23



82

No. 90

N° 90

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

First Session, 41st Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

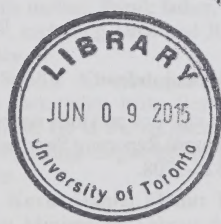
Première session, 41^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Monday 1 June 2015

Lundi 1^{er} juin 2015



Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Greffièr
Deborah Deller

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 1 June 2015

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 1^{er} juin 2015

The House met at 1030.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

Prayers.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'd like to introduce Bill and Sharon McClure. They're actually from the riding of Huron—Bruce but are here today to tour the Legislature and have lunch with me today.

Hon. Ted McMeekin: I want to introduce Diane Crawshaw and John Whitmore, the parents of page captain Dale Whitmore, from the great riding of Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale. They'll be in the gallery this morning. And I'm looking forward to having lunch with Dale Whitmore as well today. Welcome.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I would like members to help me in welcoming a staff member from my constituency office, Carol Clarke, and her partner, Brian Barber.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: It's my pleasure to introduce my partner, Shawn Kerwin, and our friend, visiting from England, Mary Phillips. Welcome to the Legislature.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Please help me welcome some individuals sitting in the east members' gallery from Rotary Cheshire Homes and the Canadian Helen Keller Centre: Cindy Accardi, the executive director; Jennifer Robbins, administration and facilities manager; Mélanie Gauthier-Perley, provincial programs supervisor; Betty-Jean Reid, board chair; and Philip Corke, director, on the board. They are having a reception today in room 228 following question period.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: It's my pleasure to welcome, as they arrive in the House today, grade 10s from F.E. Madill Secondary School, their teacher Mr. Wilhelm and their other teacher Ms. Payne, whom you might remember because she participated in your Teacher's Forum earlier this year.

Mr. Bob Delaney: On behalf of page captain Megan Sweetman I'm pleased to introduce her mother, Catherine Norris, who is in the members' east gallery this morning.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I am very happy to introduce my family here with us today in the Legislature. In the members' east gallery we are joined today by my wife, Utilia Amaral, our daughters, Talia and Grace, and my parents, Margaret and Ben Del Duca.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I'd like us to give a warm welcome to Robert Heckbert's—our page from Ottawa—Orléans—father, who is here today in the Legis-

lature, Stephen Heckbert. Thank you and welcome to the Legislature.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Joining us shortly is Jessica Bell from TTCriders, CUPE flight attendant Tracy Rowan, and the class of Perth Avenue public school and their teachers, to celebrate the winners of a 12-school, 400-student colouring competition to protest the UP Express and demand clean electric transit.

Mr. Arthur Potts: I have particularly good reason to smile today. My dentist is here, Dennis Marangos, his wife, Nadine—both proud Kiwanians—and their son Matthew.

I'd also like to introduce Heather Bellmore, mother of my assistant, David, who is a proud Ontarian but a Cape Bretoner at heart.

I'd finally like to introduce Gerald Teahen, who you all know as Tom's father. It's lovely to have all of you here today.

Mr. Yvan Baker: I've got a few folks to introduce today. Luke Woolcock is one of the pages here, from my community of Etobicoke Centre. We have a number of folks visiting him today: his mother, Vita Peri, and his aunt, Franca Peri. Also, a number of his colleagues from his class at St. Gregory Catholic School are here with us today in the gallery, led by homeroom teacher Edward York. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: We're joined in the members' east gallery today by the mother of my legislative assistant, Andrea. It's Anne Ernesaks who is here with us today.

Also, Ram Ahuja is the page captain today, from my riding. His mother, Parul; father, Kamal; and other family members, including Uma and Rea, are visiting Queen's Park today.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I would like to welcome to Queen's Park today, Mike Berry. I'm not seeing him at the moment. He is the recipient of a double lung transplant after being diagnosed with systemic scleroderma. Welcome.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Two interns have joined me at the Ministry of Labour this summer. Please welcome Olivia Pineau and Prabjit Malhi to the chamber.

WEARING OF HOCKEY JERSEY

Ms. Jennifer K. French: A point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): A point of order, the member from Oshawa.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I rise on a point of order because last night was an epic journey with a fantastic,

happy ending for the Oshawa Generals, who won the Memorial Cup. Following a record-setting season with 51 wins, the Oshawa Generals won the Memorial Cup in a thrilling overtime victory last night. It was their first Memorial Cup in 25 years and fifth in their history, following their OHL championship last month.

Mr. Speaker, since this is such an exciting day for my riding, I would ask for unanimous consent to join in the celebration by wearing my Oshawa General's hockey jersey today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I did it when the Brantford Blast won the cup.

The member from Oshawa is seeking unanimous consent to wear the jersey of the Oshawa Generals. Do we agree? Agreed.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Hometown pride is nothing to laugh at. Congratulations.

1040

CONTEMPT OF PARLIAMENT

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On a serious note, on May 26, 2015, the member from Leeds–Grenville, Mr. Clark, rose on a point of privilege with respect to a report of the Ombudsman of Ontario concerning Hydro One's billing practices and the timelines and effectiveness of its process for responding to customer concerns.

The government House leader, Mr. Naqvi, also made a submission in response and both the government House leader and the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington, Mr. Hillier, also provided me with subsequent written submissions.

Having reviewed these, and the relevant precedents and procedural authorities, I am now ready to rule.

The member from Leeds–Grenville pointed to the section of the Ombudsman's report in which the Ombudsman recounted the contact his staff had with that of Hydro One during the course of his investigation, and the Ombudsman's very scathing analysis of Hydro One's lack of co-operation and forthrightness, on the one hand, and its extreme defensiveness and evasiveness on the other.

The Ombudsman cited a litany of complaints and criticisms of the conduct of Hydro One toward his office. The Ombudsman, likewise, aimed similarly strong criticism toward Hydro One with respect to the way and extent to which the Minister of Energy was given information and kept briefed by Hydro One on its management of both its billing problems and of the Ombudsman's investigation of this issue.

The member from Leeds–Grenville stated that the issue being investigated by the Ombudsman—apparently serious, systemic billing-system problems on the part of Hydro One—was also a matter in which many MPP offices were involved on behalf of their constituents. This was noted in the Ombudsman's report.

The member asserts that, in raising these matters either directly with Hydro One or via the minister's

office, MPPs were entitled to expect honest and open dealings in order to facilitate the resolution of genuine errors and mistakes on the part of Hydro One. However, Hydro One's method of response, according to both the Ombudsman and the member from Leeds–Grenville, appears to have been virtually identical to the way it dealt with the Ombudsman in the course of his investigation.

Moreover, the Ombudsman asserted in his report that the minister was intentionally given a less-than-completely forthright “don't worry” soft sell by Hydro One about the problems, a response the minister apparently accepted and repeated in the House. By misinforming the minister, who then passed that misinformation on to the House, the member from Leeds–Grenville asserts that Hydro One has committed a contempt of the Legislature both by obstructing members in their duties and by being the vehicle by which knowingly incorrect information was conveyed to the assembly.

Lying to the House is a serious matter. To make a misleading statement, to know while making it that the statement is incorrect, and with the overt goal of deceiving the House, is Parliament's cardinal sin. These are the compound of motives and actions that constitute the so-called McGee test. If established that such a sequence of events has occurred, there can be little doubt that the Speaker would find that a prima facie case of contempt had been made out. The member from Leeds–Grenville mentions this test with respect to Hydro One's allegedly dishonest dealings with the Minister of Energy.

However, the test is not directly applicable in this case. First, this test applies to statements made by members of the House, in the House or another proceeding in Parliament. The source of the misinformation, in this case, was an outside actor. It is alleged that deceptive information was conveyed to the House by a minister, perhaps thus providing a vicarious link to the McGee test. That is, had it been established that the Minister of Energy believed the information he was stating in the House to be untrue, and had he nevertheless provided it and with the intent to mislead the House, then a prima facie case of contempt would be apparent. However, both the Ombudsman and the member from Leeds–Grenville absolve the Minister of Energy for his statements in the House because they both assert that Hydro One was disingenuous in informing the minister, who then passed on that information to the House. No one asserts that the minister intentionally set out to mislead the House.

Moreover, the Minister of Energy, who, as the government House Leader correctly pointed out in his written submission, ought to be the one to do so, has not raised a point of privilege on the grounds that he was intentionally misled by anyone, with that person's foreknowledge and their intention that the minister would then give that same incorrect information to the House.

The member from Leeds–Grenville cites the 1978 case from the Canadian House of Commons in which a prima facie case of contempt was found on the basis that an official had given false information to a minister, who then repeated that information in the House of Commons.

This case is too detailed and nuanced to go into at any length here, but a key facet was that objective evidence—sworn testimony before a royal commission—was available to make the case that the minister had been misled. I do not have that same calibre of evidence before me in this particular case.

I will turn now to the assertion by the member from Leeds–Grenville that Hydro One obstructed members of this assembly in their duties by failing to fully co-operate, in good faith, with members who were seeking to deal with Hydro One on behalf of their constituents who had fallen victim to Hydro One's billing problems.

It may be that Hydro One was in fact a bad player when it came to its dealings with members of this Legislature. The Ombudsman's report does not equivocate on that view. However, it is well-established that parliamentary privilege does not extend to the constituency or other non-parliamentary work that a member does.

The second edition of House of Commons Procedure and Practice, at page 117, cites a ruling by Speaker Sauvé that very eloquently explains this principle, as follows:

"While I am only too aware of the multiple responsibilities, duties, and also the work the member has to do relating to his constituency, as Speaker I am required to consider only those matters which affect the member's parliamentary work. That is to say, whatever duty a member has to his constituents, before a valid question of privilege arises in respect of any alleged interference, such interference must relate to the member's parliamentary duties. In other words, just as a member is protected from anything he does while taking part in a proceeding in Parliament, so too must interference relate to the member's role in the context of parliamentary work."

This view has been taken numerous times by Speakers of this House as well. For instance, Speaker Carr on April 26, 2001, stated:

"Speakers have consistently found—supported by the procedural authorities and a multitude of precedents—that privilege attaches only to a member's parliamentary duties, and not to subsidiary duties away from Parliament."

I therefore cannot find a *prima facie* case of contempt has been established with respect to Hydro One's dealings with MPPs concerning their constituents' complaints.

Though the member for Leeds–Grenville does not explicitly address this aspect, he does so by inference, and this is the crux of the argument made by the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington, so I will address the possibility of contempt of the Legislature arising with respect to the obstruction or interference by anyone with one of the assembly's parliamentary officers.

Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice states that: "Generally speaking, any act or omission which obstructs or impedes either House of Parliament in the performance of its functions, or which obstructs or impedes any member or officer of such House in the discharge of his duty, or which has a tendency, directly or indirectly, to produce such results may be treated as a contempt even though there is no precedent of the offence."

A *prima facie* case of contempt on these grounds was established in this House in 2000, on a point of privilege raised in response to a report from the Information and Privacy Commissioner. In that report, the commissioner reported that in attempting to conduct a certain investigation, her office was disregarded, discounted and thwarted to the extent that she was "unable to conduct a full and complete investigation."

The Speaker found that, "In official business dealings with an officer of this House, individuals owe an obligation of accountability to Parliament. That our own officer advises that the opposite was the case is sufficient cause in my mind to find that a *prima facie* case of contempt of Parliament has been made out. How could it be otherwise? The privacy commissioner's sole loyalty is to this House, manifested in her trusted discharge of the role and functions assigned to her, by us, in the act."

While the Ombudsman dedicates a portion of his report, under the title "Obstructing the Ombudsman," to a description of his many frustrations in dealing with Hydro One, and its posture of alleged disingenuousness, the Ombudsman does not ultimately argue that he was unable to complete his investigation, and make findings and recommendations.

For all of these reasons, I do not find that a *prima facie* case of breach of privilege or of contempt has been established.

I thank the member from Leeds–Grenville, the government House leader and the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington for their submissions in this matter.

Point of order, the member from Leeds–Grenville.

1050

Mr. Steve Clark: Speaker, I guess, as a point of clarification, I'm just a little concerned. The Ombudsman, on page 35, had a section called Keeping Outsiders in the Dark. It had four sections: Obstructing the Ombudsman, Obfuscating the Ontario Energy Board, Mollifying the Minister's Office and Befuddling the Board of Directors.

Are you saying that the Ombudsman was lying to this House in this report?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I thank the member from Leeds–Grenville for his subsequent question, although I'm not going to engage in a debate. My ruling was that the Ombudsman, in my opinion, did not show cause for not being able to complete his report. I will not debate this further. The ruling has been made.

It is time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is to the Premier. This morning, our party and our leader, Patrick Brown, laid out our concerns with the Hydro One fire sale, a sale that the PCs knew was wrong in 2002, and we know it is wrong today.

This morning, you heard Patrick Brown talk about the first demonstration of Hydro in 1910. The demonstration lit up a sign for all to see above a street in Kitchener, and that sign said, "For the People." Because of this government's mismanagement and its desire to sell Hydro One to pay its debts, the utility will no longer be for the people.

Premier, will you stop the Hydro One fire sale and keep the majority of it for the people?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Let me just say to the member opposite—and he can deliver the message to his leader—that the reason we are in the process of reviewing assets, the reason we have made a decision about Hydro One, is that we know that investing in transit and transportation infrastructure is critical to the economic life of this province and the opportunity to grow.

I know that the interim Leader of the Opposition is not supportive of investing in transit; they've made that very, very clear. But the reality is that we ran on a platform of economic growth and investment in this province, in people's talent and skills and in infrastructure, and the infrastructure component was backed up by a review of assets. That's the investment we committed to, and that's the investment we're making.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jim Wilson: Back to the Premier: The misguided actions of the government mean that Hydro One will no longer be for the people. Sadly, the sale isn't about the people, and the sale isn't about infrastructure. There is nothing new in the government's recent budget about infrastructure that wasn't already laid out in last year's budget, and it didn't include the sale of Hydro One at that time. The sale is about paying the government's debts: debts they can't keep under control. The Premier and the Liberal Party are not looking out for the peoples' interests.

Premier, if you were looking out for the people of Ontario, you would allow the auditor and the Financial Accountability Officer to review the sale to make sure we are getting the best value for the people. Will you at least commit to that today?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Let me just remind the member opposite, as I have said many times in this House, that our plan to invest in infrastructure, whether it's roads or bridges, whether it's Connecting Links in communities around the province, or whether it's transit infrastructure, that plan always contained, as part, a review of our assets, because we knew we were going to need that funding to be able to make those investments.

I will also remind the member opposite that as a backdrop to our decision around Hydro One we used the sale of the 407 as an example of how not to sell off an asset, because the way the 407 was sold off, there was no ongoing return to the people of Ontario, there was no targeted investment in the future of the people of Ontario and there was no accurate assessment of the value of that asset before it was sold off. We are not doing what the party opposite did on the 407. We're investing in the people of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Premier, how do we know that anything you just said is true? There will be no accountability after the budget is passed this Wednesday. You are selling Hydro One to a shell company that won't be subject to oversight from the Auditor General, freedom of information, the Financial Accountability Officer, the Ombudsman—none of the officers of this House.

You are telling us to believe that the \$15-billion total value is the true value of Hydro One, yet there are no independent studies, there is no cost-benefit analysis; there is nobody but you and your hired hack that tells us that we're to take your word for it.

You have already spent the \$4 billion you are going to get in terms of \$2 billion for smart meters, \$1.1 billion to cancel gas plants, \$83 million—we just learned—in terms of the Hydro One billing scandal. Premier, why should we believe anything you say?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: If you look around this province, you can see infrastructure projects being built around the province. You can see shovels in the ground, and you can see projects being completed. That is the experience that we are building on in our investments going forwards.

But I would say to the member opposite, I don't know where this party is coming from. The leader of the official opposition seems to be a little confused about where he stands.

Patrick Brown, on May 5 of this year, said, "I generally believe that the private sector can do a better job than the public sector. I generally think market conditions would be helpful for a lot of government agencies." That was Patrick Brown on May 5.

In their most recent paper on energy—that was in 2012—they suggested opening both Hydro One and OPG to investment.

What I would say to the member opposite: They don't support investing in transit and transportation infrastructure. We understand that. We do: We know that is necessary. We said all along that we needed to review assets. That is what we are doing—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. John Yakabuski: My question is to the Premier as well.

"Generally" does not mean the sale of Hydro One.

Premier, this morning we outlined three key points that worry our caucus about the Liberals' fire sale of Hydro One: first, the secrecy that is associated with this sale. The decision to sell Hydro One was made without public input, and now, with the government's recent budget amendment, we find that it will be done in complete

secrecy: no information for the public on who is making offers to purchase it, no information on the price that is being offered and no information on the conditions attached to the purchase.

Premier, why won't you come clean with your true motives behind this fire sale?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: We have said consistently the true motive is to reposition assets that we have to invest in infrastructure. There are tremendous infrastructure deficits across the province and across Canada, and it's important that we invest in those. The proceeds from this sale—a significant amount of them—will go in to build infrastructure without raising taxes, without raising more debt and without cutting programs. It is the right thing to do. That is why we are proceeding with it.

We said in our budget 2014 that we were going to reposition our assets. We identified the energy agencies, as well as others. We are going ahead with our agenda. We are making a difference for people in this province. We are creating economic development, and we're creating quality of life with our investments in infrastructure.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. John Yakabuski: In February 2013, you said it was the wrong idea. It's no wonder nobody believes a word they hear from that side over there.

Secondly, the sale of Hydro One is a bad policy decision. Whether the government owns 40% or 14%, the fact remains the same: It is not a majority stake, and they will no longer have control. The majority will do what is in the best interest of their bottom line, not the best interests of Ontarians.

Hydro One is a natural monopoly. There is no alternative. People don't have a choice if they don't like their service, but people will pay what the majority owners demand.

Premier, why won't you stop the fire sale and make sure that the sale of this natural monopoly does not harm Ontarians?

1100

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: We've taken tremendous care to protect the interests of the ratepayer and the taxpayer—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek and the member from Nepean—Carleton, come to order.

Finish, please.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, there are allegations that are made without basis. The structure, going forward, is to ensure that no other shareholder will have more than a 10% interest in Hydro One. We've put protections in, in terms of the board of directors, in terms of protecting the appointment of the directors and requiring a two-thirds vote, which will include the provincial government in all significant major decisions.

They will choose to ignore almost everything that's in the legislation, and they will spin items that have no relevance at all with respect to the way we are proceeding. They have a policy that would privatize OPG and Hydro

One. They have a new leader who wants to privatize government agencies. They can't have it both ways.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Mr. John Yakabuski: The minister has had more positions on the sale of Hydro One than there are police investigations going on in that party.

Our caucus has brought this up time and time again: The problems created with the lack of independent oversight are frightening. Public oversight of Hydro One ends this week, not when a majority is sold, but in fact before a single share is sold. As the budget is written, all public oversight disappears the day the budget receives royal assent. Clearly, that is wrong. No more investigations into the billing complaints, no more information on your smart meter boondoggle. The details of this sale are being hidden, and so will all the problems that come with Hydro One.

Premier, don't you agree that the public has a right to know what's going on with the sale of Hydro One? I'll ask you once again: Will you not remove this bad sale and any reference to it from your budget bill?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: It's interesting to note that in their version of privatization, they said quite clearly that the ratepayer would be protected by the Ontario Energy Board; rates will be protected. The reality is: Moving forward, we have protections for the ratepayer. Furthermore, they know very, very well that, moving forward, there will be an opportunity for Hydro One to expand business—to be a growth business—at the same time as they are protecting ratepayers. We will always have a 40% interest.

We have Denis Desautels, the former Auditor General—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Denis Desautels, the former Auditor General of Canada, is overseeing the implementation of an ombudsman in the Hydro One corporation. They also know, particularly some in the front benches, that the Ontario Securities Act and the Ontario Securities Commission have tremendous protections for all companies, public companies, publicly—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

New question.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. Hydro One isn't the Premier's to sell. It belongs to Ontarians. I believe that Ontarians deserve a say. Will this Premier agree to hold a referendum so that Ontarians can have their say on their Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'm happy to answer this question again; I've answered this question many times in this House.

We were very clear in our budget, in our platform and in our budget again, that in order to make the investments in transit and transportation infrastructure around the

province, we needed to look at the assets that were currently owned by the people of Ontario. We need to leverage those in order to be able to make investments in new assets that will work for people over the coming generations. That is what we have done.

We asked Ed Clark and his group to look at the assets. We made it very clear which assets we were looking at. The decisions have been made. We need to make those investments in transit and transportation infrastructure, and part of the way we need to do that is to recycle the value of current assets into new assets. That is what the investments are about.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: This is not her decision to make. Ontarians deserve a say on this Premier's wrong-headed decision to sell Hydro One. The Toronto Star says, "Rushing this risky deal into law is wrong." The Toronto Sun says, "This proposed sale of Hydro One doesn't make sense."

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Order.

Please finish.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Globe and Mail says the scheme is based on "wishful-thinking accounting." The most important question is what Ontarians want for their Hydro One.

Speaker, I ask again, will this Premier give Ontarians a say and hold a referendum on the sell-off of Hydro One?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: There are various decisions that are made by government that some members of the media and members of the opposition either agree with or don't agree with. That actually cannot be the deciding factor in a decision that is made by a government, whether a particular media outlet or a particular member of the opposition chooses to take a different position. What we have to do as government is, we have to take a position, which we did in our platform and in our budget. We have to explain that position, and then we have to move forward.

Mr. Speaker, in our budget we said it a number of times. One quote: "The government will look at maximizing and unlocking value from assets it currently holds, including real estate holdings as well as crown corporations such as Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario."

On page 164 of our 2014 budget, we said, "Valuable assets include large and complex government business enterprises ... such as the LCBO, Hydro One and OPG.... the government will launch an in-depth review process."

It was quite clear we were looking at these assets, Mr. Speaker, to—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, it's not about my opinion or some other opposition member's opinion; it's about the opinion of Ontarians, which this Premier should get before she sells off Hydro One.

On top of not making sense, being risky and being based on wishful thinking, the Premier's plan to sell off Hydro One is being called "a con job of astronomical magnitude" by a man who actually knows about financial sector cons first-hand, Speaker. He says it's a con job because it's such a great deal for banks and investors and such a bad deal—such a bad deal—for the people of Ontario.

Will this Premier give Ontarians a say and agree to hold a referendum on Hydro One? It's their right to decide whether to sell it, not hers.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, what I would just say to the leader of the third party is, she just cannot have it both ways. She can't rewrite history. She can't say on the one hand that we didn't talk about what we were going to do, in the face of all of the material that we put forward—including her own statements. On July 9, 2014, the leader of the NDP said, "The budget says in black and white that the government is looking at the sale of assets, 'including ... crown corporations, such as Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario.'"

Mr. Speaker, we said we were reviewing assets. We said we were looking at leveraging those assets in order to invest in new assets. That is what we are doing. We are putting protections in place so that the regulatory controls, the price controls, will remain in place with the new company.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is to the Premier. That is exactly why New Democrats voted against that terrible budget not once but twice. That's why.

Ontarians are paying some of the highest hydro bills in this country. They cannot afford to pay more—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Order.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Finance, come to order.

Please finish.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: They can't afford to pay more, Speaker. Even Bay Street fraudsters think that the Premier's numbers are fishy. Once the Premier starts down this road, there is no going back.

Before the Premier makes yet another wrong decision for the people of Ontario, will she give them a say through a referendum?

1110

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: It is very important to recognize that, as government, there are many things that have to be tackled at once. The budget that the leader of third party is talking about did include the review of

public assets. We said we were going to do that, and we said we were going to do that because we know that investing in transit and transportation infrastructure is what is needed right now.

All across this country and in North America, there are jurisdictions that are looking for ways to build infrastructure. They know that if we are going to compete—we in North America—with other jurisdictions around the world, we have to make those investments. So, that was part of our budget. But also part of our budget was an increase in wages for PSWs, it was an increase in money for developmental services, and it was an increase in the minimum wage. The leader of the third party voted against all of that as well.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton Mountain, come to order.

Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Selling Hydro One hurts middle class families and struggling Ontarians. It hurts moms and dads who need to pay the bills. It hurts young people looking for jobs because it's hurting businesses that want to hire those young people. It hurts health care. It hurts education. It hurts every corner of our province. This is the wrong decision, end of story.

Will the Premier do the right thing—will she finally do the right thing—and give Ontarians a say on the sell-off of their Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, I would say to the leader of the third party that you can't on the one hand say that we talked about maximizing assets, selling off some of the assets that are owned by the people of Ontario in order to be able to invest in new assets, which is what she has said repeatedly, and then at the same time say that we didn't talk about this and that somehow it is a surprise to people that we said we were going to review assets in order to be able to invest in new assets. The fact is, we said we were going to do this.

This is not an easy decision; this is not an easy decision for the people sitting on this side of the House. But what is an important decision is that we make the right investments in 2015 so that in 2020 and 2025, we have the infrastructure that's needed so that businesses can move their goods, so that people can move and so that those families that the leader of the third party is talking about can get to their children's daycare and get to their jobs in a decent amount of time.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier can't pretend that she was upfront with the people of Ontario during that election campaign. But New Democrats know the Premier's ways—we know the Liberal ways—and that's why we were so concerned.

But there is still one fundamental question that needs to be answered by this Premier: Why will this Premier not bother to hear from the people of Ontario by putting the sale of Hydro One to a referendum? Why will she not do that, Speaker?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The reason that we were so explicit in our budget and in our platform and then in our budget again—the reason we were explicit about how we were going to pay for transit and transportation infrastructure was that we knew that those were going to be difficult decisions. So we made it very clear that we were looking at OPG, we were looking at the LCBO, we were looking at Hydro One, we were looking at real estate that is owned by the people of Ontario, and that we needed to recycle, we needed to leverage those assets in order to make those investments.

We have made a set of very difficult decisions in order to make the investments that we know are necessary, because we know that if we don't upgrade our transit, if we don't invest in Hamilton, in Kitchener–Waterloo, in Ottawa and in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area—if we don't do that, if we don't build the connecting links in our rural communities, if we don't repair those roads and bridges and build new ones, we will not be able to compete. We must make those investments.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My question is as well to the Premier. On February 2, 2013, her energy minister said to sell off Hydro One was a “failed plan.” In fact, not only did the Premier campaign against the sale of Hydro in every single election since she entered politics, she and Dalton McGuinty said that it was bad for families, it would cause power rates to go up, and it was just “plain wrong.”

The Premier has changed her policies and beliefs over the past year on anti-SLAPP legislation, on government advertising laws and on a publicly funded documentary starring herself, but the Hydro One about-face is the biggest, most dishonest flip-flop we have seen to date.

She now says the fire sale won't cost us more, and dismisses any concern of a lack of oversight. I have a question. Was she lying then or is she lying now?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member will—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'll take care of the judgment here. The member will withdraw.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm sorry. Excuse me—I didn't hear it.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Withdrawn, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): And if the member says it again, she will be named.
Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I guess it's the last week in the Legislature, Mr. Speaker.

I would just say to the member opposite that I've been very clear. Actually, from the time I started to run in the leadership race, I was very clear that investing in transit and transportation infrastructure was a priority. I'd had the experience of being the Minister of—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I actually had the experience of being the Minister of Transportation for two years, and I had travelled the province. There was not a jurisdiction in this province that didn't—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Leeds–Grenville and the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke will come to order.

Carry on.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: There wasn't a jurisdiction in this province that wasn't suffering from underinvestment in infrastructure—the underinvestment that we inherited when we came into office in 2003. We've been working on that, but we know that if we don't make those investments going forward, we won't be able to thrive economically, and so we're going to make those investments.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Her changing position on Hydro One's sale is not the only flip-flop with respect to this file. Take what she's going to do with the money and the profits. The Premier said the profits from Hydro One would pay for infrastructure. Then she said it would go toward the debt when she was reminded—and only when reminded—that it was the law. Now she's bargained off shares of the company before it has been sold to prevent a strike in the energy sector. She has spent the profit three times already, and the company hasn't yet been sold. This isn't a coherent plan for an asset sale in the province of Ontario and it's not an appropriate way to manage the energy sector in this province.

The two opposition leaders have asked you to withdraw this piece of legislation from the budget. Will you do it, or is your pantsuit on fire over there?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member will withdraw.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Withdrawn.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, we've stated it very clearly all along, consistently, since 2013, and in our budget 2014 we did so twice. We put it in the platform of our election. The people spoke and reaffirmed their desire for us to move forward. We introduced it again in the 2015 budget. It is a very pragmatic and deliberate way to maximize the valuations of a substantial crown corporation while at the same time holding the majority shares of that corporation for the benefit of the public. It's going to be one of the largest growth companies. We're doing it in stages: only a 15% tranche in the first stage. It will then determine its true maximized value. We will do so to protect the public interest in the best interest of our public, and it will be broadly held as a result.

More so, the member opposite and that party were actually proposing a full, 100% sale of that corporation, which we are not—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

New question.

1120

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question to the Premier: Not a single Ontarian voted to sell Hydro One—not a single Ontarian. For months the Premier and her ministers insisted that was never the plan. They stood in the Legislature and insisted that Hydro One was staying public.

Now they've changed their tune and the Premier is insisting a sell-off was the plan the whole time. This is a mess. While the Liberals are making a 180-degree turn, Ontarians are sending a clear message: Stop the sell-off.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Eglinton–Lawrence will come to order: second time. I don't need the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek to tell me.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Will the Premier give Ontarians the chance to have their say on Hydro One in a binding referendum?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Let's examine exactly what's happened since 2013. Pre-election 2013 we had a budget which indicated that we were going to assess all of our entrepreneur assets for repurposing to invest in infrastructure.

After the election, we had a budget that was approved—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Timmins–James Bay.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: —based on specifically reviewing, among other things—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Timmins–James Bay: second time.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: —energy agencies in terms of repurposing those assets.

Coming forward—before the last election, in April 2013—we appointed Mr. Clark and the asset council to review. They studied that for almost a year. They then provided an interim report. They did further analysis. They provided a report. Everybody in this province who was paying any attention knew where we were going—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Actually, many of them read that interim report saying that it shouldn't be sold off. They knew where it should be going.

Ontarians own Hydro One. It's clear they were kept in the dark. For months, the Liberal government insisted that Hydro One would stay public. Ontarians want a say. They don't want to pay the price for this wrong decision.

Will the Premier give Ontarians a say on Hydro One by putting this to a full public referendum?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: There have been a lot of major decisions and major initiatives that have taken place in this House, some of the most important in the history of

this province. They did not go forward with a referendum. We have made this very much part of our agenda since 2013. We're moving forward with an agenda that makes sense.

The idea of broadening the ownership of public agencies is not new. The NDP in Manitoba introduced a balanced budget bill—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The two-way conversations have to stop. I need to focus.

Just finish. Wrap up, please.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I'll wrap up, Mr. Speaker, with that final comment. It's called the Balanced Budget, Fiscal Management and Taxpayer Accountability Act, introduced by the NDP government in Manitoba—

Interjection: NDP.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: NDP, for sure—where they want to consider the privatization of Manitoba Hydro, the Manitoba Public Insurance corporation and others—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED

Mr. Chris Ballard: My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. You may know that June is Deaf-Blind Awareness Month in Ontario and, as of last week, was declared by the Canadian Senate as Deaf-Blind Awareness Month across Canada. June is the birth month of Helen Keller, who was a champion to people who are deaf-blind. Her courage and determination is an enduring example of how, despite enormous challenges, individuals of all abilities can achieve great things.

For someone who is deaf-blind, communication barriers can seriously limit their access to activities most of us take for granted. Greater independence is achieved through better access to the community and its services.

Minister, your ministry provides funding to the community agencies that support individuals who experience deaf-blindness. Can you please give the House an overview of the community agency network which supports the deaf-blind community?

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Thank you to the member for Newmarket—Aurora for the question.

My ministry's goal is to build greater independence for people living with disabilities, including, of course, those who are deaf-blind. It is the work that our community agencies and professional intervenors do for people who are deaf-blind that really assist in building a more inclusive Ontario.

Intervenor services delivered by 21 community agencies across the province enhance communication between individuals and their community through tactile sign language, Braille and American Sign Language, with the goal they can live as independently as possible.

I had the great privilege of visiting both the Canadian Helen Keller Centre and the Rotary Cheshire apartments in Willowdale earlier this year. On my visits I met

several of the staff, who every day bring the world to life for people who are deaf-blind. I want to thank and celebrate those individuals for their skillful work and dedication.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Chris Ballard: Making Ontario a more inclusive province is a responsibility we all share. There are many people to credit for the advances the deaf-blind community has achieved.

As you said, Minister, it is those dedicated individuals in the intervenor profession who work hard to open the doors of opportunity for people who are deaf-blind. Also, a lot of momentum has come from the work of the leading partners in the deaf-blind community, who have raised awareness and worked closely with the government to build a better system. This government believes that every Ontarian should have the opportunity to participate in the life of their community as much as they are able.

Ontario is now a leading jurisdiction in the world for intervenor services and this government has tripled funding for that program since 2003. Minister, can you please detail some of the work your ministry has been doing to better support the deaf-blind community?

Hon. Helena Jaczek: I'm proud to say that Ontario has set an international standard for service delivery and is emerging a world leader in policy development for programs and services for people who are deaf-blind.

We are currently developing a new funding framework that will result in a consistent approach to funding that is fair, equitable and accountable.

Our government has increased the minimum hours of service for all individuals who are deaf-blind so that those who require these services receive a minimum of 10 hours per week. Also, we fund an emergency intervenor service that provides support to deaf-blind individuals should an emergency ever arise.

Last year we invested an additional \$3.84 million over three years in interpreter and intervenor services to help support a stable and well-trained workforce. Together we will build a stronger, more inclusive Ontario where people who are deaf-blind can participate to their fullest potential.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Thank you and good morning, Speaker. My question is for the Premier. Much like your scrapped documentary, you're going to unprecedented lengths to keep the public in the dark about your Hydro One sale. Even before all our MPPs had a chance to speak to the budget, you closed off debate. Then you rammed it through committee, sitting only four days and only in Toronto.

You turned down every one of our amendments that would have given businesses, families and seniors a fighting chance. Worse than that, you put forward a surprise amendment that immediately transfers Hydro One to a new corporation, one that you control; and now it's

that corporation that will sell off its pieces to shareholders and remove scrutiny immediately. Premier, what is it that you're so desperate to hide from us this time?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, I wonder what it is that he's so desperate about that he won't look at the facts. The facts are that in 2000, when Premier Harris restructured the electricity system, all of the LDCs, all of the utilities and Hydro One then and Hydro One today were set up with a holdco and an operating company. It already exists. It was a technical correction to describe what is now. We have a holdco now, we've had it for the last 15 years and we're going to continue to have one moving forward. It was an amendment to correct the record. I don't know how he doesn't know that. He should.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Supplementary?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I guess we could have talked about it over a cup of coffee. This amendment that they snuck in is the most serious piece of paper that this government has ever put forward. It transfers the largest asset owned by the people over to a corporation that you control, but you didn't do it here in the Legislature. Last Thursday it was snuck in as an amendment, a minor change to the budget. You just heard the minister call it that.

1130

This minor change now immediately takes away the power of the Auditor General, the Financial Accountability Officer, freedom of information and the Ombudsman. They're cut out of the entire deal immediately. We have now no way to know which insiders they're paying to do what or even if Ontario is going to be getting a good deal.

This is an affront to democracy. Premier, will you tell Ontarians what is so bad about the deal that you went to such drastic lengths to sneak this by us?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, almost all public utilities, and public companies, for that matter, have holding corporations. Most corporations, be they crown-owned—similarly, the federal government and other provinces that have tried and have maximized some of their holdings in the same format have used holdcos. In fact, the Conservatives proposed the very same holding corporation when they were looking at this very venture.

This will help maximize the value of all of our shares, of which the province continues to hold 100%. More importantly, it helps protect public ownership as we proceed forward so as not to dilute the overall shares held through the holding corporation.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: No, it helps to protect you from telling the truth.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Nipissing will come to order.

New question.

CLASS SIZE

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: My question is to the Premier. We know that keeping class sizes manageable is fundamentally important to student success. We also know that the Liberal government is aware of the fact that all research points to the importance of class size caps to ensuring the best learning environment for our students.

Just a few years ago, the Liberals said, "We know smaller class sizes allow students to get more of the attention they need to learn to read, write and do math at a high level." So what happened? Our schools are already in chaos because of more than a decade of chronic underfunding of education in Ontario. Bigger class sizes will only make the problems worse.

My question is simple: Will the Premier make the chaos in schools even worse for our kids by allowing class sizes to increase this fall, yes or no?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Education.

Hon. Liz Sandals: As I've said repeatedly to the member opposite, in fact, the funding model this year provides \$22.5 billion, just like the funding model last year provided \$22.5 billion, despite the fact that there are fewer students projected to be in the schools in September, which means we're actually spending more per student. If you were to look at the details of the funding model for next year, you would find that the class size generators in our grants are exactly the same next year as they are this year. I'm not sure why the member thinks that we are trying to change class sizes. That's not something that we are trying to do. The class size generators and the funding model are exactly the same now as they were last year.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Speaker, here we go again with the Minister of Education playing the blame game and refusing to take responsibility for the mess her cuts have made to education. We all know that—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Order.

Please.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: We all know that class size caps are on the table. I find the Liberals' change of heart on class size caps very perplexing. It is clear that the Minister of Education has lost control of the situation and is now trying to force students to pay the price for her ill-informed cuts. All evidence suggests lower class size caps are important to preserving quality education for our kids.

The Premier and her government pay lip service to evidence-based policy, but when it comes down to it, it's obvious that they are not committed. The Premier and her

government are clearly out of touch with what matters to most families.

So I'll try asking the Premier again: Will the Premier maintain current caps on class sizes and preserve the quality of children's education, or will she let class sizes increase this fall and force students to pay the price?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I want to make it clear that we remain absolutely committed to negotiating collective agreements with all of our partners, both the teachers' unions and the education workers. We have three months between now and next September. I fully intend to be at the bargaining table over the next three months and to reach those collective agreements.

But I must repeat: We have not cut education funding. In fact, if you look at education funding since 2003, the per-pupil funding has actually increased by over \$4,000. The per-pupil funding has gone up by 59%. That's not blaming anybody; that's just simply providing accurate information.

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. As the member for Barrie, I know how important transit and transportation is for those living in my community.

Time and time again, I have constituents tell me that we need to continue to invest in critical infrastructure projects that will keep Ontario moving. They are frustrated by sitting in traffic. They are tired of gridlock. They are upset that they are spending time, that could be spent with their loved ones, parked on Highway 400. They want to know that our government is making investments that will keep them and their families moving efficiently and reliably across this province.

Mr. Speaker, could the minister please tell members of this House how our government is planning to invest in transit and transportation infrastructure across the province, to keep Ontario families moving?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I want to begin by thanking the member from Barrie for her advocacy on behalf of the people living in her community.

Like many living and working in the GTHA—and, frankly, in communities right across Ontario—I have felt the frustration of gridlock. Successfully fighting our congestion challenge requires strong leadership, the kind of leadership that Premier Wynne is showing, and an ongoing and consistent commitment to making the right decisions, even when those are not necessarily politically convenient.

Families across this province are asking us to be bold, to build, to put shovels in the ground and to ensure that more transit and transportation options come into actual service, giving them and their families real choices.

Last June, they gave us a mandate to put progress ahead of politics and to deliver results instead of more rhetoric. That's exactly what we are doing, with critical investments being made in every corner of Ontario.

I'll provide an additional update in the supplementary answer.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: I want to thank the minister for his response. I know that those living in my community will be excited to hear that we have such a strong vision for building transit and transportation infrastructure across this province. I'm pleased that the investments we are making will help those living in my community of Barrie. As an example, regional express rail will provide better and more reliable service for those travelling along the Barrie GO line.

But I am sure that members of the House will be interested in knowing exactly how we are delivering our vision. Can the minister please tell members of this House what investments our government has and will be making to deliver our transit and transportation vision for Ontario?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: We are delivering on our plan to move Ontario forward. Because of our \$13.5-billion investment, weekly trips across the GO rail network will increase from 1,500 trips to nearly 6,000 in 10 years.

We were first at the table to support the construction of the Waterloo and Ottawa LRTs and will be there again to offer significant support for phase 2 in both communities.

We have built the Union Pearson Express, which comes into service this Saturday, connecting Pearson airport to Union Station.

Here in the GTA, and the area around the GTA, we are and we will build LRTs in Hamilton, along Finch and Eglinton in Toronto, and in Mississauga, Brampton and Peel region.

We'll continue to make critical investments through our \$31.5-billion Moving Ontario Forward plan.

If I can say, listening to the question posed this morning by members of that party, particularly the member from Nepean—Carleton, I almost pity poor Patrick Brown, because he has to lead that crew, and they've made it clear why they have lost four—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Order.

New question.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Randy Hillier: My question is to the Premier. Premier, you offered an outrageous lump-sum payment—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Premier, you offered an outrageous lump-sum payment and stocks in the soon-to-be-privatized hydro utility, to get the Power Workers' Union on board with your fire sale.

This weekend, I came across a quote from June 2012: "We've been pretty clear: We'll keep Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One in the public's hands, as they should be...."

1140

Premier, that was your Minister of Agriculture and his thoughts on the sell-off of Hydro One. Will you be open and transparent and tell this House what you offered your minister to get him on board with your fire sale?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: This corporation will be one of the fastest-growing corporations in Canada. It's going to be one of the largest ones here in Ontario, based right here in Ontario—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish please.

Hon. Charles Sousa: It will be broadly held. No one person can have more than 10% of this corporation, meaning that there will be more opportunities for retail and public investors to have ownership of the corporation, and we will do so in a very pragmatic and diligent manner to maximize the valuations for the entire public.

More importantly, we'll enable greater value of the corporation and reinvest some of the proceeds into another very important public investment, to generate even higher value for the entire public. That's in keeping with the public good, and we'll continue to do so.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Clearly, the Premier doesn't take the agriculture and rural Ontario minister very seriously. I'm not surprised that you've ignored your minister's objections.

However, I would think that you would take the concerns of the dean of the Legislature and your chair of cabinet seriously when he expressed the following: "I think anyone who looks objectively at Hydro One, the transmission grid in this province, would recognize that it would naturally be something that is best kept in public ownership and public hands."

Premier, after 38 years in this Legislature I would think there was nothing left you could offer your chair of cabinet. Premier, what did it take to get him to contradict himself and throw away his Liberal principles?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: We're maintaining ownership of Hydro One. We're maximizing its value for the public good. We're reinvesting further into transmission as well as into other public infrastructure like public transit, which is important to the people of Ontario.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Charles Sousa: More importantly, this is not about selling an entire corporation. What we are doing is retaining at least 40% of that corporation, and at the start we're maintaining 85% ownership—

Miss Monique Taylor: Last time I checked, 40% wasn't a majority.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton Mountain—

Hon. Charles Sousa: —in order to assess and maximize our values to the public. That's exactly in keeping

with what we said we should do, and it's in the public good.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton Mountain is warned.

One wrap-up sentence is available.

Hon. Charles Sousa: The member opposite—for what he stands for—I'm shocked by his question in the first place. We are retaining ownership, and we're doing so for the—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

AIR-RAIL LINK

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. The Union Pearson Express will begin exclusive diesel train service for business-class travellers this Saturday. This is the only new rapid transit service the Liberals have delivered in Toronto since the flurry of transit promises that were made way back in 2007. This government is keeping a promise it made to business-class travellers, but it's breaking the promise that it made to the communities throughout which this dirty—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. The Minister of Energy with withdraw.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Withdraw, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Carry on.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It is breaking the promise it made to the communities through which this dirty and noisy diesel train will run.

Can the Premier tell us exactly when the last diesel train will run on the Union Pearson Express?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I'm always delighted to have the opportunity to stand in my place, or be anywhere in the GTA, to talk about the extraordinary success that is and will be the Union Pearson Express. I mentioned it earlier; it comes into service this Saturday.

It's a train that will finally connect two of Canada's busiest transportation hubs, Union Station and Pearson airport, with trains running—25 minutes long is the actual trip itself. We had the chance to try it out. These trains will be running 19.5 hours a day.

It's being delivered on time, it's being delivered on budget and, most importantly, it's being delivered on time for the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games, which will be starting a little bit later on.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: In 2007 the government promised Torontonians that it would build two new subway extensions and eight new light rail lines. Then, before the last election campaign, the Premier declared the downtown relief line—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. The member from Trinity-Spadina is warned.

Carry on.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Before the last election campaign, the Premier declared the downtown relief line to be a top transit priority.

But since 2007, they've cut \$4 billion from transit funding. They've cancelled five of the light rail projects, deferred the Sheppard East LRT until at least the next decade, and there is no sign of the two subway lines, including the downtown relief line, that the Premier promised to prioritize just a year ago.

Why should Torontonians believe that the government will not again delay and defer its promise to electrify the Union Pearson Express?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Everywhere that we go in the GTHA, and also in communities like Kitchener-Waterloo and Ottawa, people see very clear evidence of the extraordinary investments that we are making to build transit and transportation.

Here in the city of Toronto: If the leader of the NDP took the opportunity to travel around this city, she would see that the Eglinton Crosstown LRT is under construction—the single largest public transit project in this province's history; she would see that the Toronto-York Spadina subway extension is currently under construction—the first time the subway will run into the 905; she would see, again, as I mentioned a second ago, that the Union Pearson Express will be operating this coming Saturday. She would also note that over the last decade we've invested \$11 billion to build up GO Transit—23 million more people using GO Transit today than were 10 years ago.

Unfortunately, what that leader doesn't say—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm reminding the minister: I stand, you sit.

New question.

LABOUR DISPUTE

Mrs. Laura Albanese: My question is for the Minister of Labour. The workers at Crown Metal Packaging have been on strike for 21 months. The employer has been using replacement workers at the site to keep up production and continue their very profitable business.

Minister, you've made it clear that the ongoing labour disruption at Crown Metal was concerning to you and you said that the dispute does not follow the norm in terms of labour relations in our province.

It's not just concerning to the minister, Mr. Speaker; it is also concerning to the entire labour community. They've sent thousands of letters urging for greater action, and I'm sure that you would be aware that labour leaders are here at Queen's Park this morning for a press conference on this very situation, pressing for action.

Minister, you appointed an industrial inquiry commission in April but you've heard nothing since. Speaker, through you to the minister: When can we expect a resolution on this matter?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you to the member for asking another question on this. The member from

York South-Weston is paying the attention that this issue deserves.

The member is right; the ongoing dispute at Crown was concerning enough that we took action and we appointed the industrial inquiry commission. We're trying to get to the bottom of the remaining issues and advise on a path forward. This is unusual in Ontario, but on this side of the House we believe that the best deals are negotiated right at the bargaining table.

Sometimes that relationship breaks down. Further action may be required from time to time. That's what's happened at Crown metals. The process is unfolding with the assistance of Mr. Mitchnick. I'm pleased to report that since the appointment of the inquiry the parties have resumed talking and negotiations are continuing. But while they're at the table, it's important that we let the discussions happen and continue to hope that an agreement will be—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Supplementary?

Mrs. Laura Albanese: The employees at Crown need answers and they need them sooner rather than later. They've been out on the lines for 21 months. They're tired of walking the line, and no one seems to be listening. We need to let them know that someone is listening. It's time that the workers know that our government has their back and that we won't let their struggle go unnoticed.

Crown employees want the minister know that the clock is ticking. They want to know that they will be able to return to their jobs. The minister has said that he has appointed Morton Mitchnick as the head of an industrial inquiry commission, and the commissioner has had nearly two months to resolve the ongoing dispute. Speaker, through you to the minister: What else can the government do? When can we expect to receive the advice of the industrial inquiry commission?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thanks again to the member for York South-Weston for continuing to bring this issue forward on behalf of the working people in this province.

The Ontario Labour Relations Act, 1995, grants a few special powers to the Minister of Labour to intervene during a labour dispute of this nature. Under section 37 of that act, I've already appointed an inquiry commission that is led by Morton Mitchnick. His job is to look into and report back on the dispute, with recommendations as to how we can move forward. He's a well-known and respected mediator. He's a very good arbitrator. I've got full confidence in the ability of this individual to provide this House and me with sound and reasonable advice on a path forward.

It's essential to understand that the best deals are the ones made at the table. While the parties remain at the table, it's essential that we let them continue.

I can inform this House, Speaker, that I anticipate Mr. Mitchnick's report will be here on—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

New question.

TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: My question today is for the Minister of Education. Minister, you know now that because of virtually no bargaining taking place at either the central or the local level, the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario has escalated their work-to-rule campaign effective today.

Minister, the clock is ticking. We both know that a little over 800,000 elementary school students and their families are impacted by this escalation. Now, with just 99 days left before the students return from their summer recess, you have the potential of education turmoil on your hands. Minister, when will you actually get serious about the non-bargaining that's taking place and the turmoil that is building in the education system?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I want to emphasize that there are three months remaining before the next school year starts. In fact, bargaining has been going on at various tables. As I've mentioned many times, we actually have nine central tables, and just because bargaining isn't happening at one in a particular week doesn't mean that bargaining isn't happening at another table in a particular week. Central bargaining is ongoing. We are gradually working towards resolution on a number of issues. I am certainly committed to being at the table over the next three months, and I would hope that everyone would be there.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, on a point of order.

Mr. Bill Walker: I'd like to welcome Paul Rosebush, CEO of South Bruce Grey Health Centre. He's here to meet with Ministry of Health staff in regard to the Chesley restorative care unit.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Windsor–Tecumseh, on a point of order.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Speaker, with your indulgence, I have two friends here this morning from the Windsor region representing the Windsor Construction Association. They arrived after the start of question period. President Steve Koutsonicolas is here, and the executive director, Jim Lyons. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Speaker, they invite you all to the reception at 6 in the dining lounge put on by the construction association of Ontario later today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1153 to 1300.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TOURISM

Ms. Laurie Scott: This week is Tourism Week in Canada. From Sunday, May 31 to Saturday, June 6, the

tourism industry is celebrating in every province across the country, and Ontario is no exception.

With the summer season set to begin, I know our tourism operators are busy preparing to welcome visitors from around the world to our great province.

According to the World Tourism Organization, tourism is growing globally at a rate of 5% per year. Here in Ontario, we need to strive to keep pace with that rate of growth.

Tourism is a vitally important industry for Ontario's economy, as it represents 149,000 businesses, more than 305,000 employees, and brings in \$28 billion each year in receipts. The tourism industry touches every riding across Ontario, including my own, of course, of Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, where it helps drive the local economy. For every additional \$1 million of visitor spending in Ontario, the provincial economy yields 13 new jobs, \$845,000 in GDP and \$173,000 in provincial tax revenues.

This week, the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario is meeting with industry representatives to talk about ways in which they can continue to grow Ontario's tourism sector beyond the \$22 billion in visitor spending it currently receives and increase the number of international visitors who choose to make Ontario their destination of choice.

On behalf of Ontario's tourism industry, we invite you to join us in celebrating Tourism Week in Canada.

JIMMY VELGAKIS

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Mr. Speaker, I stand here in honour of Jimmy Velgakis. You don't know Jimmy, but he's the elderly Greek gentleman who's out front of Queen's Park every day for a few hours, and he's on a hunger strike. This is his third hunger strike. He's an injured worker and has been since the 1990s. He worked for the city. With the very first one, we got a commitment from WSIB to open his case just to have a hearing. He's not asking for a ruling, just a hearing. It never happened.

I did his second hunger strike with him. Together, we went without food for 10 days. That was in 2013. Again, we got a promise from WSIB that they would open a tribunal for him. Again, nothing came of it.

Now he's back again.

Today is Injured Workers' Day, so I'm saying this in honour of Jimmy and also in honour of all injured workers. All he's asking for is justice. He knows he can't control the outcome of the tribunal. He just wants his day in court. He just wants justice to be done.

We're calling on the city, because they were his employer, to help this process, and we're, of course, yet again calling on WSIB to do the right thing, the humane thing, and give this elderly Greek gentleman his day in court while he's still with us.

Again, I would encourage all members here to say hello to Jimmy. He's out there, and he will be out there until he gets justice.

SPRING BIRD FESTIVAL

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: I'm pleased to rise in the House this afternoon to speak about my riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore. We're very fortunate to be a waterfront community, and many of my residents are great stewards of Lake Ontario. Today, this beautiful waterfront sanctuary boasts a diversity of environments—wetlands, woods, shoreline and meadows—that provide food, habitat and protection to many plants and animal species, including fish, painted turtles, beavers and, of course, birds.

Mr. Speaker, recently, I was fortunate to visit the sixth annual Spring Bird Festival in Sam Smith park. The city of Toronto, in partnership with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, the Humber Arboretum, Citizens Concerned About the Future of the Etobicoke Waterfront and Friends of Sam Smith Park organized this annual free public festival to create awareness about the importance of bird habitats.

It's a wonderful family event which boasted hourly guided bird walks, children's activities, bird-nesting-box workshops, displays and bird-viewing stations with telescopes.

Toronto has been referred to as a songbird superhighway because at the height of the spring bird migration, five million to 10 million birds pass over Toronto in a single night.

Mr. Speaker, I invite everyone in this House and all my constituents to enjoy birdwatching along Etobicoke's waterfront this summer and to join my community at next year's Spring Bird Festival in Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

AGGREGATE EXTRACTION

Mr. Ted Arnott: Mr. Speaker, the licensing and approvals process for new pits and quarries continues to be controversial in Ontario today. Nearby residents are often concerned about the impact that a proposed quarry or gravel pit will have on their groundwater, the environment and property values, as well as the impact that the gravel trucks will have on their local roads and infrastructure.

Local municipalities often have no choice but to spend hundreds of thousands of ratepayers' dollars responding to these applications. They rightly question the huge cost of dealing with applications, including appeals to the Ontario Municipal Board. However, the reality is that if we're going to build anything in Ontario, whether it's schools, hospitals, roads or bridges, we need the aggregate that is extracted from pits and quarries.

On April 22, I wrote to the Minister of Natural Resources, urging him to update the Aggregate Resources Act and strike the right balance between our need for resource extraction and our concomitant need to protect our environment. In my letter, I wrote that the approvals process should be scientifically based, open and transparent; should ensure that people have a meaningful say; and that the adjudication of disputes is independent, impartial

and not cost-prohibitive. I also outlined a number of suggestions that I believe can improve the process, following up on many of the recommendations made almost two years ago by the Standing Committee on General Government in its review of the Aggregate Resources Act.

This is an important issue for many people in Wellington–Halton Hills. I urge the minister to carefully review my letter and tell this House when he will proceed with the changes he has promised, consistent with the recommendations of the standing committee.

INJURED WORKERS

Ms. Cindy Forster: It's an honour to stand on behalf of New Democrats and our leader, Andrea Horwath, to recognize the 32nd Injured Workers' Day in Ontario. I want to start by saying that I wish we didn't have to commemorate this day and that I wish I didn't feel we have to quantify the raw data—but that's important.

According to the WSIB's own data, on-the-job fatalities have increased by 40% over the last five years—and we could be doing more and better.

The grim reality is that each year, more than 80 workers die in traumatic workplace accidents, 300 more workers die an even slower death as a result of occupational illness, and over 200,000 are maimed or injured on the job.

The reality is, the Liberal government is not doing enough for workers.

Worse, WSIB has been found to be publicly under-reporting its numbers, specifically covering up 1,150 fatalities over the last nine years. This is the agency tasked with compensating workplace victims, and yet it's trying to erase a third of all those lives lost. That is unacceptable and a blatant injustice for the families.

In the words of Justice Meredith, the founder of our workers' compensation system, our standard must be one of "full justice, not half measures."

The Dean report and the Arthurs report are sitting on a shelf somewhere, collecting dust.

On behalf of the NDP and New Democrats across the province, I reaffirm our commitment to fighting for workers across the province of Ontario.

KAYLA BAKER

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: This past Saturday, May 30, I participated in the third annual Run aLung event in my community of Cambridge. It was at last year's run that I met the organizer, Susan Tremblett. Run aLung was created by her inspirational daughter Kayla Baker, at age 14. Kayla's dream had always been to run, but she was unable to because she was waiting for a double lung transplant.

At age 2, Kayla was diagnosed with cancer. She was treated with chemotherapy and surgery to remove the tumour. Kayla became a young ambassador for the SickKids Foundation, appearing in a fundraising video.

Unfortunately, Kayla developed pulmonary fibrosis as a consequence of the chemotherapy, and she needed to wear an oxygen mask all the time while waiting for a lung transplant.

Kayla captured the hearts of our entire community as she raised awareness of the importance of organ donation.

The green ribbon campaign in support of Kayla was a sight to see. Thousands of green ribbons adorned trees, poles and homes in Cambridge.

1310

Kayla received her left lung transplant in April 2013. Sadly, after a long battle and inspiring journey, she passed away at age 15 on January 1, 2014.

Her mother, Susan, with support from the Ontario Lung Association, beadonor.ca and the Run aLung committee, keeps Kayla's dream alive by bringing awareness about organ donation and raising thousands of dollars for SickKids Hospital, leaving an indelible mark on those of us who walk and run in Kayla's memory.

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Today I would like to highlight some outstanding business initiatives happening in Perth–Wellington.

In Wellington, several communities have collaborated to launch the Renew Northern Wellington program. The town of Minto, the township of Mapleton and the township of Wellington North have launched this downtown revitalization program which will partner new business with empty storefronts. This program will help entrepreneurs get exposure and grow their businesses by providing low-cost access to a storefront location. Renew Northern Wellington has the added benefits of stimulating employment, generating economic activity and invigorating their downtowns, making them more desirable to visit, shop, dine and invest in.

I would like to recognize everyone involved in this program, including the municipalities, the chambers of commerce and the Mount Forest Business Improvement Association.

The county of Perth has another exciting new initiative to attract entrepreneurs and businesses to our area. They've launched a new video series featuring local employers doing interesting and innovative things in their businesses and talking about what it takes to grow. These videos will help raise the profile of Perth county, showcasing it as a place that is truly cultivating opportunity.

I want to congratulate everyone involved in this project, including the county of Perth and the Perth County Visitors' Association.

I welcome you all to visit Perth–Wellington and see for yourselves our outstanding business talent.

CARASSAUGA

Mr. Bob Delaney: Mississauga's vibrant cultural diversity was on display in May at the Carassauga Festival

of Cultures for 2015. What began in 1986 with just 10 countries hosting pavilions—has grown to 30 pavilions displaying one of the world's most culturally diverse cities, right in our city of Mississauga.

Always a non-profit volunteer organization, Carassauga celebrated its 30th anniversary this year. The festival has become Mississauga's annual premier cultural event, the largest of its kind in Ontario and second-largest in all of Canada. Visitors attending this year's event could sample signature food items from more than 72 countries. Your 2015 Carassauga passport allowed visitors to document each pavilion that they visited.

I began my annual journey, as usual, at the Portuguese Cultural Centre of Mississauga in Streetsville for the opening, and the same evening I also visited the Chinese, Canadian, Turkish, Croatian, African, Korean, Pakistani and Filipino pavilions, to name just a few.

The three-day event featured many cultural performances, authentic international cuisine and evocative cultural displays that showcased the multicultural diversity across Mississauga.

A must-attend event in Mississauga, Carassauga offers a glimpse into global diversity without ever leaving the comforts of our city.

GALA DE L'EXPRESS ÉTUDIANT

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I'm so proud to see the francophone youth of Orléans and Ottawa involved in their schools and recognized for it.

Il est tellement important que notre jeunesse s'implique dans leurs écoles et puisse mettre leur talent d'écrivain de l'avant. Je suis fière de l'initiative du journal l'Express d'Ottawa, qui a organisé cette année leur 13^e édition du gala de l'Express Étudiant le 21 mai dernier. Plus de 300 reportages des journalistes-étudiants provenant de 22 écoles francophones ont été remis, et 15 700 \$ en bourses ont été distribués afin de féliciter ceux et celles qui se sont distingués dans 18 catégories.

Les grands gagnants de la soirée furent : Ann-Lin Lagacé de l'école Béatrice-Desloges, récipiendaire du prix de la Plume de Bronze; Ronel Kaboré de l'école Garneau, qui a gagné la Plume d'Argent; Candide Uyanze de l'école Béatrice-Desloges, qui a reçu la Plume d'Or; alors que Rosalie Lemay, également étudiante de l'école Béatrice-Desloges, a été honorée de la plus haute distinction, soit la Grande Plume.

J'aimerais terminer en faisant mention de comment je suis fière des résultats scolaires de l'année 2013-2014, alors que les conseils scolaires de langue française de l'Ontario ont atteint un taux de diplomation moyen de 92 %, excédant la cible de 85 % du ministère de l'Éducation ontarien.

Félicitations à tous les participants, et félicitations aux conseils scolaires qui les guident vers un avenir prometteur.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I thank all members for their statements.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Ms. Soo Wong: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum): Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

Bill 91, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts / Projet de loi 91, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1316 to 1321.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All members please take their seats.

Ms. Wong moved a report from the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs on Bill 91, as amended.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura
Anderson, Granville
Baker, Yvan
Balkissoon, Bas
Ballard, Chris
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Bradley, James J.
Chan, Michael
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike
Crack, Grant
Damerla, Dipika
Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe
Dong, Han
Duguid, Brad
Flynn, Kevin Daniel

Fraser, John
Gravelle, Michael
Hoggarth, Ann
Hoskins, Eric
Hunter, Mitzie
Jaczek, Helena
Kiwala, Sophie
Kwinter, Monte
Lalonde, Marie-France
Leal, Jeff
MacCharles, Tracy
Malhi, Harinder
Mangat, Amrit
Martins, Cristina
Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill
McGarry, Kathryn
McMahon, Eleanor

McMeekin, Ted
Meilleur, Madeleine
Milczyn, Peter Z.
Moridi, Reza
Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Naqvi, Yasir
Oraziotti, David
Potts, Arthur
Qaadri, Shafiq
Sandals, Liz
Sergio, Mario
Sousa, Charles
Takhar, Harinder S.
Thibeault, Glenn
Vernile, Daiene
Wong, Soo
Wynne, Kathleen O.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.
Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Bisson, Gilbert
Clark, Steve
Fedeli, Victor
Fife, Catherine
Forster, Cindy
French, Jennifer K.
Gates, Wayne

Gélinas, France
Gretzky, Lisa
Hatfield, Percy
Mantha, Michael
Martow, Gila
McDonnell, Jim
McNaughton, Monte
Miller, Norm
Miller, Paul
Natyshak, Taras

Nicholls, Rick
Pettapiece, Randy
Sattler, Peggy
Smith, Todd
Tabuns, Peter
Taylor, Monique
Thompson, Lisa M.
Vanthof, John
Walker, Bill
Yakabuski, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 53; the nays are 30.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I declare the motion carried.

Report adopted.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 13, 2015, the bill is ordered for third reading.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 12 midnight on Monday, June 1, 2015, for the purpose of considering government business.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 12 midnight on Monday June 1, 2015, for the purpose of considering government business.

Do we agree? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1325 to 1330.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi has moved that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 12 midnight on Monday, June 1, 2015, for the purpose of considering government business.

All those who agree, please stand, one at a time, to be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura
Anderson, Granville
Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Baker, Yvan
Balkissoon, Bas
Ballard, Chris
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Bradley, James J.
Chan, Michael
Chiarelli, Bob
Clark, Steve
Colle, Mike
Crack, Grant
Damerla, Dipika
Del Duca, Steven
Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe
Dong, Han
Duguid, Brad
Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Fraser, John

Gravelle, Michael
Hoggarth, Ann
Hoskins, Eric
Hunter, Mitzie
Jaczek, Helena
Kiwala, Sophie
Kwinter, Monte
Lalonde, Marie-France
Leal, Jeff
MacCharles, Tracy
MacLaren, Jack
Malhi, Harinder
Mangat, Amrit
Martins, Cristina
Martow, Gila
Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill
McDonnell, Jim
McGarry, Kathryn
McMahon, Eleanor
McMeekin, Ted
McNaughton, Monte
Meilleur, Madeleine

Milczyn, Peter Z.
Miller, Norm
Moridi, Reza
Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Naqvi, Yasir
Nicholls, Rick
Oraziotti, David
Pettapiece, Randy
Potts, Arthur
Qaadri, Shafiq
Sandals, Liz
Sergio, Mario
Smith, Todd
Sousa, Charles
Takhar, Harinder S.
Thibeault, Glenn
Thompson, Lisa M.
Vernile, Daiene
Walker, Bill
Wong, Soo
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Yakabuski, John
Yurek, Jeff

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All those opposed, please rise, one at a time, and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.
Bisson, Gilles
Fife, Catherine
French, Jennifer K.
Gates, Wayne

Gélinas, France
Gretzky, Lisa
Hatfield, Percy
Mantha, Michael
Miller, Paul

Natyshak, Taras
Sattler, Peggy
Taylor, Monique
Vanthof, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
The ayes are 69; the nays are 14.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Mr. Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the membership of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice.

Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that Ms. Jones replace Mr. Hillier on the membership of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that Ms. Jones replace Mr. Hillier on the membership of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment.

Do we agree? Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS**CURRICULUM**

Mr. Monte McNaughton: I'm proud today to stand on International Children's Day and present a petition signed by 185,000 people. The petition reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in 2010 the Ontario Liberal government promised to consult with voters before implementing a revised sex education curriculum which many parents felt was age-inappropriate and too explicit; and

"Whereas since 2010 the Ontario public has not been given adequate opportunity to provide feedback on proposed sex education changes; and

"Whereas in late October 2014 the Ontario Liberal government announced that more revisions to the sex education curriculum would be implemented in time for the following school year; and

"Whereas the announced plans to consult only one hand-picked parent per school does not constitute broad public feedback on the curriculum, and therefore, the Ontario Liberal government is breaking its 2010 promise to consult the people of Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Repeal the sex education component of the health and physical education curriculum planned for September 2015 and start over with a meaningful parental consultation process that actually gets buy-in from parents across the province of Ontario."

Speaker, I'm proud to support this petition and will be signing it.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Miss Monique Taylor: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Privatizing Hydro One: Another wrong choice.

"Whereas once you privatize hydro, there's no return; and

"We'll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

"We'll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

"We'll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what's happened elsewhere;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come."

I couldn't agree with this more, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to affix my name to it and give it to page Jessica to bring to the Clerk.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas microbeads are tiny plastics less than one millimetre in diameter which pass through our water filtration systems and get into our rivers and the Great Lakes; and

"Whereas these microbeads represent a growing presence in our Great Lakes and are contributing to the plastic pollution of our freshwater lakes and rivers; and

"Whereas the scientific research and data collected to date has shown that microbeads that get into our water system collect toxins and organisms mistake these microbeads for food and these microbeads can move up our food chain;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Mandate the Ontario government to ban the creation and addition of microbeads to cosmetic products and all other related health and beauty products; and

"The Ministry of the Environment conduct an annual study of the Great Lakes analyzing the waters for the presence of microbeads."

Speaker, I agree with the petition, affix my name and give it to Katie to bring down.

AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I'm very pleased, as I shared with the Premier just moments ago, to share a petition on behalf of a grade 10 civics class from F.E. Madill Secondary School today. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario provincial agri-food sector has grown more than 10% since 2002; and

"Whereas Ontario's agri-food sector contributes approximately \$34 billion to the province's economy and supports more than 740,000 jobs across Ontario; and

"Whereas Ontario's food exports hit a record high of \$10.8 billion in 2013; and

"Whereas Premier Kathleen Wynne recognized excellence in agri-food innovation today and challenged the sector to double its growth rate and create 120,000 new jobs in Ontario by 2020;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To add a compulsory component to the grade 10 careers course (GLC20), which will allow students: to research career information about various careers in the agri-food sector, and identify the job opportunities/trends available in the agri-food sector. In addition, the province should financially support the Ontario Agri-Food Education program, to ensure that every careers classroom will have a teacher ambassador (from OAFE) visit their classroom to discuss career opportunities in agri-culture."

I thank F.E. Madill very much for their petition; I totally agree with it. I'll affix my signature and send it to the desk with Duncan.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Ms. Cindy Forster: A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the decision to close the Welland general hospital was made without consultation with the residents of south Niagara, and without regard for potential social and economic impacts of this closure; and

"Whereas the recommendations to the government contained in Dr. Kevin Smith's report on restructuring of the Niagara Health System included no evidence to support the closure of the Welland general hospital; no needs assessment for the residents of south Niagara; no costing of the entire restructuring plan; and no proposals to mitigate the impact of reduced hospital access; and

"Whereas the catchment area of the Welland general hospital includes four municipalities, with a population of over 90,000, including a high percentage (+25%) of seniors and people living in poverty;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"(1) Stop the planned closure of the Welland general hospital;

"(2) Conduct a proper third-party evidence-based study to assess the present and projected health care and

hospital services requirements of residents in the catchment area of the Welland general hospital;

"(3) Hold public consultations, not only during the assessment process, but also on recommendations resulting from this study."

I support this petition, affix my signature and give it to page Megan.

1340

WATER FLUORIDATION

Mr. Bob Delaney: I'm pleased to present this petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. It's one of a continuing series, signed by thousands of Ontarians. It's entitled "Fluoridate All Ontario Drinking Water," and it reads as follows:

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, a concentration providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentration to protect against adverse health effects; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

I am pleased to sign and support this petition, and to send it down with page Star.

HOSPITAL SERVICES

Mr. Norm Miller: I've received hundreds of further petitions with regard to health care in Muskoka. This came from the corporation of the Town of Bracebridge, and it's to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare.

"Support of Acute Care Hospital Services at Both the South Muskoka Memorial Hospital in Bracebridge and the Huntsville District Memorial Hospital.

"Whereas the continued delivery of acute care services at the South Muskoka Memorial Hospital in Bracebridge is crucial to the long-term sustainability of the community and the continued provision of adequate health care services for the residents of the town; and

"Whereas the provision of a full range of emergency, in-patient and surgical services at both the South Muskoka Memorial Hospital in Bracebridge and the Huntsville District Memorial Hospital by Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare (MAHC) is vital for all of the communities in the Muskoka region; and

"Whereas it is recognized that small changes in health care funding and service delivery methods could have potentially devastating impacts over the long term for some key hospital sites; and

"Whereas it is understood that hospitals are key community assets and their importance to ongoing community sustainability needs to be recognized in any long-term health system capacity planning process undertaken by the province; and

"Whereas Bracebridge and Huntsville strongly support the development and implementation of a long-term provincial health care strategy that allows for multi-site delivery of comprehensive (acute care) services including emergency, in-patient and surgical services.

"I, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare as follows:

"(1) That the province of Ontario ensure that the changes to the health care delivery system currently being implemented to improve hospital efficiency do not negatively impact access to services and the quality of care in Bracebridge and the entire Muskoka region;

"(2) That the province of Ontario ensure that the changes undertaken by the province recognize the unique and important role that smaller hospitals, such as the South Muskoka Memorial Hospital and the Huntsville District Memorial Hospital, have in promoting economic development and creating sustainable communities in Ontario;

"(3) That the province of Ontario and Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare take appropriate steps to ensure the continued delivery of comprehensive acute care hospital services on a multi-site basis at both the South Muskoka Memorial Hospital in Bracebridge and the Huntsville District Memorial Hospital."

I support this petition and will give it to Jessica from Milford Bay in my riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that is called "Privatizing Hydro One: Another Wrong Choice," and it reads as follows:

"Whereas once you privatize hydro, there's no return; and

"We'll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

"We'll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

"We'll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what's happened elsewhere;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come."

I proudly affix my name to this petition and will give it to page Megan to send to the table.

MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the government of Ontario created the 'new city' of Hamilton on January 1, 2001, under the City of Hamilton Act, 1999 by amalgamating six lower-tier municipalities including the town of Flamborough and a single upper-tier municipality;

"Whereas on April 13, 2000, a press release from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs announced, 'The new city of Hamilton is one step closer to lower taxes as a result of legislation (amalgamation) introduced today by the minister,' and on July 14, 2000, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Tony Clement, announced that to prevent taxes from skyrocketing for Flamborough taxpayers, Flamborough will stay in Hamilton.

"Thirteen years since Minister Clement's announcement, taxes for Flamborough have skyrocketed. They have increased 57.3%; and

"Whereas Bill 26, the Savings and Restructuring Act of December 1999, and the City of Hamilton Act, 1999, were adopted to achieve the stated purposes of "fewer politicians while maintaining effective representation; lower taxes; better service delivery; less bureaucracy; better accountability."

"In fact, over the past 13 years, none of the above has been achieved. We have now bigger, more costly and more bureaucratic government. Staff personnel pre-amalgamation totalled 3,657 excluding police (O'Brien report 11/99). As of December 20/12, the employee count has increased to 7,559, excluding police, library and HECFI; and

"Whereas in December 2003, March 2005, November 2005, September 2006 and September 2008 independent surveys were held in Flamborough, all of which showed a very high degree of dissatisfaction with our present form of government; and

"Accordingly, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly to set up a commission for an independent study and report which would cover the fiscal and social impact of amalgamation upon the citizens of Flamborough. It should compare the average cost per household of most core services, general government, fire and public works both before and after amalgamation as well as a comparative analysis of taxation per household and the size of bureaucracy."

I sign my name to this petition, I give it to page Luke and I support this petition.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Good afternoon. This is a petition to lower hydro rates.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas household electricity bills have skyrocketed by 56% and electricity rates have tripled as a result of the Liberal government's mismanagement of the energy sector;

"Whereas the billion-dollar gas plants cancellation, wasteful and unaccountable spending at Ontario Power Generation and the unaffordable subsidies in the Green Energy Act will result in electricity bills climbing by another 35% by 2017 and 45% by 2020; and

"Whereas the Liberal government wasted \$2 billion on the flawed smart meter program; and

"Whereas the recent announcement to implement the Ontario Electricity Support Program will see average household hydro bills increase an additional \$137 per year starting in 2016; and

"Whereas the soaring cost of electricity is straining family budgets, and hurting the ability of manufacturers and small businesses in the province to compete and create new jobs; and

"Whereas home heating and electricity are a necessity for families in Ontario who cannot afford to continue footing the bill for the government's mismanagement of the energy sector;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately implement policies ensuring Ontario's power consumers, including families, farmers and employers, have affordable and reliable electricity."

I agree with this petition and I will send it down with page Dale.

1350

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Unfortunately, that concludes the time we have available for petitions, but we'll be back tomorrow.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 28, 2015, on the amendment to the motion to apply a timetable to certain business of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): When we last debated this motion, the member for Timmins-James Bay had the floor. I see he's in the House. I recognize the member for Timmins-James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It just occurred to me, a bit of a conundrum: The Speaker or a member of the House is not allowed to

say somebody is absent, so if you got up and said what you said and I wasn't here, you would be out of order.

Hon. Liz Sandals: But he's the Speaker.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: No, they've got to live by the rules as well. It's just something that occurred to me as I was standing up to start off the debate.

As I was saying the last time we had a chance to debate this, first of all, I want to put on the record that we're not going to slow this down. We're not opposed to any of the bills that are contained within this essentially omnibus time allocation motion that was put into a substantive motion.

There are four bills listed in here, all of which New Democrats have said we support. As I said last week, if the government were just to allow the bills to go their natural way, those bills would probably pass faster. Should the opposition decide to hold up the substantive motion, we would actually be able to slow these bills down longer by way of your substantive motion than if you hadn't introduced it, which leads me to the question: Why is the government doing this? Maybe they were looking for a fight. Maybe the government wanted to make it look as if the opposition was slowing things down, and they had a bit of a strategy to try to embarrass the opposition on bills they support. Because clearly, New Democrats, on every one of these bills—and I'm going to go through them.

Bill 9, the environmental protection act with regard to the banning of the use of coal—we haven't used coal in this province for a while. It's a bit of a moot bill, but New Democrats have said we are in favour of that particular legislation.

An Act respecting Invasive Species—I'm the critic for that and MNR. I thought I was pretty clear in my opening comments in debate at second reading that New Democrats would be supporting that particular bill, Bill 37.

Then there's the anti-SLAPP legislation, Bill 52. New Democrats have stood in the House and said we support that bill as well. In fact, Andrea Horwath, the leader of our party, has actually moved such a bill in this House and was the first one to bring that issue here, I believe, two Parliaments ago.

And Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin, is a bill that we spoke to that we actually support.

New Democrats, and I believe Conservatives, have agreed to most of these bills. I know New Democrats have agreed to all four. The government, if they wanted to allow these bills to continue down the regular course of debate, would have had these bills pretty shortly, because all but one are at six and a half hours of debate, or pretty darned close, at which point the government could have time-allocated.

But you wouldn't even have to time-allocate. We had indicated to you that we had no interest in debating these bills beyond the regular six or seven hours we take to debate a bill. We had no intent to slow these things down. We wanted members who wished to do so to be able to put on the record what they thought about these bills,

because these bills will go to committee, and I think it's important for this Legislature to give the committee a little bit of direction when it comes to opening comments at second reading so that they are able to think about that and the public can think about that when it goes into committee, so that when we do our hearings and we finally get to clause-by-clause, we're able to have amendments that deal with the concerns that, number one, the public has raised, and number two, that members have raised in this Legislature.

So why is the government time-allocating an omnibus time allocation motion with this substantive motion when they could have allowed these bills to go their regular course? The only thing I can come up with is that the government decided, "You know, it's not good that the opposition New Democrats are supporting our legislation. We would rather," said the Liberals, "have the opposition New Democrats oppose it so that we can go to the stakeholders and say, 'Oh, my God, look at this. The NDP is holding things up.'" The government says, "Well, since the NDP is not holding these things up and are actually in favour of these bills, maybe we can find a way of creating a crisis by which we can say the NDP is holding things up." So they come forward with an omnibus—and I've got to say, it's the first time since I've been here that a government has done this type of thing on their own. Normally, a programming motion is done with the agreement of all three parties. This government is trying to write a programming motion in the singular self and themselves move this motion as a way of being able to move these bills forward. I think the government thought, "Well, you know what? We can go to the environmental stakeholders and we can say to the environmental stakeholders, 'Look at that: The government is trying to do the right thing for your bill, and the opposition is holding it up. Those New Democrats—imagine that. They have the gall to stand in the House and to debate and to hold this thing up.'"

And I say, where's the government coming from? The reality is, New Democrats said at second reading, where we're at with all of these bills, that we support them. We don't intend to slow them down. We only intend to use the regular time allotted normally to debate at second reading so that we can put our comments on the record and, as we've done with other bills, allow the bill to collapse naturally and to go into committee so the committee can then decide what the best approach is when it comes to hearings on the particular bill, rather than have the House prescribe how much time the bill will have in committee.

I think the motive—and I think I've latched on to this pretty correctly—of this particular motion is the government saying, "We're going to create a crisis that makes it look as if New Democrats are opposed so that we can whip up the stakeholder groups to let them know the NDP is not in favour of passing these particular bills that deal with the environment." And I just say to the government: Shame on you, because what you've actually done is harm the process by which people who care about

these bills would have been able to deal with this in committee.

Let me give you an example. If one of these bills or all of these bills had naturally gone into committee, as they should have, and which we as New Democrats have told you we will do—I've gone to House leaders' meetings, and I know my colleague is here with me who is on the House leaders' team for the New Democrats, and I've said it to the Tory House leader and I said it to the Liberal House leader: We are not going to hold up these four pieces of legislation. We will allow these bills to die naturally within the House, and that means just end the debate at between six and seven hours. Our members are going to stand up, and there are some people who want to speak to them, but we think that these bills should go to committee and people should have the right to be heard.

This government plays a bit of a game to make it look as if there's a crisis where none exists; it tries to set it up that New Democrats are slowing up these bills when we're not. So they slow up their own bills, and then what do they do? They time-allocate the committee process in the time allocation motion. Now, if I'm a person who cares deeply about the St. Lawrence basin and about the Great Lakes Protection Act, if I'm a stakeholder who cares a lot about anti-SLAPP, for or against, because I know there are two sides to that issue, or if you are somebody who cares passionately about the end of use of coal and the other bill, you now are limited to how much time you're going to have in committee, because the government is time-allocating the committee process by way of this motion.

So the members of the assembly are not going to have an opportunity to be able to speak—it's not that the members won't have the opportunity. In fact, it's not the question that the members are not going to have the time to speak to it; the public is going to have less time to be able to come to committee to be able to present to the bill. I think you're doing the people of Ontario and those groups that care about these bills and those people who are opposed to these bills a great disservice because you're not allowing the bills to travel and you're not allowing the committee to determine how long they should be in committee. These things should go to committee. They should be allowed, based on the input as far as how many people want to present, to determine how long we need for public hearings and where we need to go.

Let me give you an example—I'm going to do them in order.

We have ending the use of coal. We don't use coal anymore, but we've stopped the use of coal by practice of what we've done by way of policy in this province. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that every party in this House has the same position. Conservatives, New Democrats and Liberals all agree that we should not use coal. That's where we're at now. We all had similar things in our platforms to end the use of coal. But I think it would be important for the people in the Sarnia-Lambton area and the people in the Atikokan area, where coal was being

used and has been taken away—and we no longer use coal in Thunder Bay, for example. It would have been important for people there to have their say to talk about what it has meant to their communities since we stopped using coal.

All three parties owe it to the public to be able to hear what they have to say about how this policy has affected them, and other people could have been able to come to committee here in Toronto—but at least we would have known that there are 10 people in Sarnia–Lambton or there are 20 people in Thunder Bay who want to present. The committee could have made the decision to go to that particular community and be heard.

1400

Now we're not going to be able to do that. Why? Because the Liberals have decided, by way of this time allocation motion, to limit the ability of the public to have their say. How is that a service to the public of Ontario? Quite frankly, they're playing the environmental groups against this Legislature. We would have been better off to allow these bills to go the natural way. Instead, the government is taking away the ability for people to come to those communities to speak about that.

The question of invasive species: There's not a member of this House who got up and said they were not in favour of invasive species legislation. Every member that I heard get up and debate, on all sides of the House, said this is very necessary legislation. But we all said the same thing: Liberals, New Democrats and Conservatives said this bill had to go to committee because there were some issues we had to deal with.

I look at the dean of the Legislature, because he knows far more than everybody else. When the ministry drafts a bill, their best intention is put into the drafting, and they think they've got it all covered. But it's when you get to committee that you find out, "Whoops, that doesn't work so well. We need to be able to amend it one way or another."

When we limit the ability for the public to have their say, as we are by way of this time allocation motion, we don't have a chance to do a better bill. We're forcing ourselves into doing a bill, and we're prescribing how the process is going to work when it comes to hearings and clause-by-clause, in a way that limits the ability of the public to have their say.

I know that in the case of invasive species, there's a number of issues in regard to this bill that are going to have to be looked at, especially when it comes to the right of property, one of the issues that I know the member from—what's Mr. Hillier's riding?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Lanark and Addington.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: The member from Lanark–Addington has a number of issues on property rights that he's actually going to want to raise—and the people he represents and that he speaks for—as a bit of a libertarian on this issue, will want to speak to. Do I agree with him? Probably not. But I think that people need to be heard.

I think the mark of good legislation, the art of a good Legislature and the mark of a good government is when

you're prepared to listen to all sides—even those sides that disagree with you—so that you can at least take into account what they're saying, what their point of view is, how they think the bill should be amended, and then you have a decision to make.

And do you know what? I get it. I've been around here long enough to know—and all members of this assembly get it—that in the end, the Legislature and the committee will have a decision to make as to how the bill will be amended. We'll never amend the bill to the liking of every citizen in the province of Ontario, but I think you at least owe them the right to appear at committee to have their say and have that say taken into account when it comes to amendments to bills.

In the case of invasive species, I know there's a lot of input that people want to give on that particular bill. As critic for MNR, I've heard a number of people say that.

On the question of the anti-SLAPP bill, there are those people who are very much in favour of this bill—I think that most members of this assembly are. But we've also been lobbied by some—specifically, people in the forestry sector—who feel that this is going to become a problem for them. The government may not agree with what people in the forestry sector are saying about the anti-SLAPP legislation, but again, I think the government has the responsibility to at least hear what the argument is.

It's like you're in your workplace, there's some sort of conflict going on and you don't want to hear what happened as far as the problem is concerned. If you don't listen to what the problem is, how can you fix it? You at least have to hear what people have to say.

In the case of the anti-SLAPP legislation, I'm not saying this is not a good bill. My own leader introduced a bill on anti-SLAPP two Parliaments ago; it's something that we've long supported. And I know there are some people who are opposed to it who live in my own community of Timmins–James Bay. My point is: I believe you have a responsibility to give those who are in favour and those who are opposed the ability to come before committee and have their say.

On the last bill, in regard to the act to protect and restore the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence River Basin: If people think this is only about communities along the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes, they've got something else coming. The Great Lakes watershed goes all the way up to my friend's riding in Nickel Belt and all the way up to my friend's riding in Timiskaming–Cochrane. North Bay is part of it. Sudbury is part of it. There are lots of communities. Elliot Lake is part of it. There's a number of communities that are part of the basin—pretty well all of southern Ontario is part of it—that are affected by this particular bill. Again, is this something that's important that should be done?

I know that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture supports this bill generally, but they have some issues that they think this bill has to be dealt with. They are saying, "Listen, there are things in this bill that need to be fixed. If we don't fix them, it's going to cause problems."

It's a little bit like what happened with some of the other bills that we've seen come through this Legislature, where the government comes forward with well-intentioned legislation but ends up not taking into account what should be done by the public, because they don't have a chance to present, and then they find out they've got a lot of problems with legislation.

I'll give you a good example of that. The dean of the Legislature will remember the five different versions of the property assessment bill that came through this Legislature. It was first the Liberals under Mr. Peterson, then it was the New Democrats under Mr. Rae, and three bills under Mr. Harris and Mr. Eves that dealt with property assessment. Why? Because we didn't properly take into account what people had to say at the beginning. If we had taken our time and heard what people had to say, and not just reacted to the politics of property assessment, we probably would have drafted a better assessment bill right from the beginning. Instead, we had four bills come to this House after the initial property assessment bill that the Liberals tried to introduce, but their Parliament—they cut it short by calling an election less than three years since the election. They didn't get a chance to do it, and it was the New Democrats who ended up moving a bill that, at the end of the day, was not, in my view, completely thought out. I'll say that upfront. When the Conservatives came and changed it, they made it even worse, and we had to bring three bills after that to fix it in the first place. I would just say to the members across the way, that's why you have to be able to hear the public when it comes to this.

I just want to say again that New Democrats are in support of the four bills in this particular motion. These bills would have died naturally. What I mean by "died naturally" is the debate on them would have ended and the bills would have naturally gone into committee. If the bills had gone into committee naturally rather than being time-allocated, as the government is showing as doing in this particular motion, the committees could have decided the proper amount of time for hearings and should the bill travel, yes or no? It would have been a much better process if we would have allowed this to go through.

Instead, I believe what the government tried to do is they tried to set up a scenario by which they were able to play politics with this by saying, "Oh, look at this. The opposition is obstructing the passage of these particular bills," and they tried to whip up stakeholder groups that the opposition, and specifically the New Democrats, were the ones who tried to slow this down. Again, we supported these bills at the second reading stage, all four of them.

We don't even want to debate this particular substantive motion beyond today. We had started debate on this last week. I took 30 minutes. We're into the second day now. I'm going to finish my 30 minutes. I believe that we have an agreement that we'll be done all this by about 4 o'clock this afternoon, when we're going to wrap up debate on this particular motion, which demonstrates that neither the opposition nor the New Democrats had any intention of holding this up.

It brings us back to the question: Why did the government bring a motion that, quite frankly, was not necessary, considering—

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: It was flexing their muscles. I think the member from Hamilton Mountain is perfectly right; it's part of flexing their muscles, but it was also about the politics of trying to show New Democrats as trying to hold up progressive environmental legislation. I just say to you: Sad on you and shame on you for playing games with essential legislation like this because, in the end, neither the Conservatives nor the New Democrats were slowing down these bills. The fact that the government is bringing forward a bill that essentially is a time allocation motion on bills that we already agreed to I think is pretty sad. Again, I just say that it's a mark against the government.

In the last 10 minutes that I've got, just because it is a procedural motion, let me just speak to procedure. It won't be a surprise to any of you, because I've said this in this House before, that the government shouldn't time-allocate. I think the fact the government time-allocates is a declaration that the government has failed in its ability to manage the House successfully. That's really what it's all about.

1410

I know some members don't want to hear this and they think, "Oh, the opposition is always up to playing games." If that was the case, why are we ending debate this afternoon at 4 on this particular motion? If that was the case, why have we agreed to end debate on a number of bills in the last couple of weeks without even moving you into time allocation?

We have said to you that if you have a bill we don't have a great problem with, we're not going to hold it up, but, yes, we're going to get up and debate it somewhat. I think it's incumbent upon members to put on the record what they feel. For example, if you were to bring a bill in that dealt with something in my constituency, I'd probably want to get up and say something about it. But does that mean to say that you're holding up debate and you're trying to filibuster a bill? No, it just means to say you're putting your views on the record. The critics have to do their jobs, the minister has to do their job when it comes to introducing the bill and putting a few words on the record, and I think some number of members have to speak to it. But what the government is doing when they move to time allocation is that they're really admitting that they have failed to manage the bill through the House.

Here's what should happen: The government should, at the beginning of a session, have an idea of what bills they're going to be bringing through the session. For example, when we came in here for the spring session back in February, the Premier's office should have been in discussions with the House leader's office of the Liberal Party, saying, "Here are the bills that are important to us, that we know we want to pass by the end of the spring session. Here are the bills that we think we can

pass at second reading, send them into committee during the summer and then send them back in for third reading in the fall." If you had been able to do that, it means to say that we the opposition House leaders, my colleague Mr. Clark and myself, would have said, "Okay, we'll give you these bills, but in exchange we want to travel those bills." It would be an actual to-and-fro about how this place should work.

And, quite frankly, that's the way this place should work. Mr. Bradley, who is the dean of the Legislature and who was in the House far before time allocation, understands full well that when we didn't have time allocation, this House was akin to a minority Parliament, because any opposition party could hold up the government ad infinitum on any particular bill. I know Mr. Harris did it with us as New Democrats on a budget bill. I know Mr. Kormos did it with the Liberals on an auto insurance bill, and I know Mr. Bradley did it one time on a bill when I was in government. I can't remember the particular one, but he went on for two days to talk about a bill because he felt strongly that something had to be done on a particular issue—I can't remember what it was—and until the government moved on that issue, he was going to talk that bill out. He had the floor for at least two sessional days, if not three. My point is, when Mr. Bradley first came into this place—and myself and Mr. Wilson and Mr. Arnott came into this House—there was no such thing as time allocation, and the House functioned. Why? Because the government understood that they needed to have the co-operation of the opposition to be able to move legislation forward. So what would happen is that the government House leader would sit down with the opposition House leaders and they would have a discussion about how legislation moves forward.

Now we've put ourselves into this situation of time allocation. And I'll admit it: It was my party who brought the concept of time allocation into the standing orders—and it was a mistake. It was a very bad thing to do. Unfortunately, Mr. Harris comes to power and then after that Mr. McGuinty comes to power, and they close down the opposition more and more. I think we've gone down a path that has been a disservice to this Legislature and a disservice to the people of Ontario, because the people who really get hurt at the end is the public. When the public doesn't have an ability to be able to come in and have its say on legislation, and bills don't travel around this province to communities of interest when it comes to legislation, it's the public that, quite frankly, is being denied.

So I say to my friends in the House that we should be trying to work towards a model where we don't time-allocate, where we do sit down and say that okay, the government is going to have a budget bill—surprise—and the government probably is going to time-allocate their budget bill if they can't get an agreement—surprise. But on other things it's like, why do you need to time-allocate bills that the opposition already supports, as we are with these four particular bills? I would argue that

you'd be far better off doing that because it means that in the end the public would be better served.

So I hope—I hope—that the government House leader, because he is showing some signs of trying to work with the opposition on a few items, as we're showing we're prepared to work with him on a few items, takes that to heart and realizes that in the end that's the best way to do things.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, I would encourage the government to think about changing their ways when it comes to time allocation and actually doing what this Legislature is all about, and that is to allow the Legislature to work in a way that allows business to go through the House with some debate, that allows those bills that are more important to the government or controversial—with those, you may very well have to speak in the House a little bit longer, but that is just the process. That's not the end of the world. It's the way this place should operate.

Again, I just want to say for the last time for those who actually tuned into this late: We as New Democrats didn't oppose any of these bills—the four environmental bills that are being time-allocated. We had already indicated that we support them. I believe that the government, by way of time allocation motion, is in fact playing a game with the environmental groups by making it look like New Democrats and Conservatives are trying to slow this down and that we don't want to pass this legislation. Oh, look at how obstructionist we're going to be. We're so darned obstructionist that we're going to allow—where we have the ability to hold this up for far longer than the government wants because it's a substantive motion—the motion to go forward because we do support the bills. We had said that before they decided to ever time-allocate this.

So I would encourage the government to stop playing games and to stop playing the stakeholder groups against the opposition in the way that you tried to here. Do your job and be respectful of the process. I think if you did this, this place would work far better.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this time to debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Hon. James J. Bradley: I'll be sharing my time with the Attorney General and the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry.

I just listened to a lot of theories from the House leader of the New Democratic Party, and they're nonsense. The government does not want to attribute any motives to any particular political party. The government is simply wanting to pass four pieces of legislation that seem to have been before this House in one way or another, even before the election, for a long period of time and particularly where there is consensus, where there is agreement and where there has been considerable discussion both in the House and outside of the House that there's an opportunity to move the bills forward. The government wants to ensure that they do get moved forward. There's no wanting to make anybody look bad

because they will counter that with their own arguments; it's simply trying to get the legislation through the House.

I'm glad, although I hate canvassing for old mistakes, but I will—it is true that the New Democratic Party in 1993 changed the rules drastically. I remember wanting to not have the government proceed with that. They had a majority and they changed the rules at that time, and we're stuck with those rules. In fact, the Conservative Party was quite clever on that occasion; my recollection is they actually voted for the rule changes because they thought they were going to be in power and they could use those same rules. I think only the Liberal Party opposed them at that time. Nevertheless those are the rules that are there. There has been tinkering with them since then by different governments where there has been give-and-take on the rules which govern debate in this House.

This motion is strictly there to take four particularly important bills, but bills which have a pretty good consensus in this House in terms of agreement, and have some certainty as they're going to proceed through this House. If they were brand new bills I could say that the opposition would have a case to be made. If we had taken four brand new bills which hadn't seen the light of the House before or hadn't seen much in terms of discussion in the House before and in committee, I would say they'd have a very good case. So that's the only motivation the government has in wanting to proceed with these.

I think the House leader of the NDP and probably the House leader of the Conservatives would agree that in the best of all worlds we would have an agreement which could make all legislation proceed in a reasonable manner. The fact is I was in opposition more than I was in government. If I were to confess today to tactics used in the past—when I was in opposition I remember the opposition parties didn't always have as a motivation dealing with a particular bill at length because they were concerned about that bill; they simply wanted to slow down the entire agenda of the government. That happens from time to time, and we would prefer that that not happen again.

1420

There's a long history to this and I don't want to get into the long history. I want to simply say that these are four important bills. They've been introduced in the House, some more than once. The public is aware of them. There has been input from the public. We've invited that input. It can be done both in legislative committees and outside of legislative committees.

My colleagues are going to be speaking to specific acts within their realm. As a former Minister of the Environment, I can tell you that the act respecting invasive species is important, but it's largely under Natural Resources and Forestry, and that minister will speak to it. I support it.

The bill that deals with SLAPP suits is going to be spoken to by the Attorney General, and I happen to agree with that. I'm not convinced by those who are opposed. I

think it's important to hear those people; I don't disagree. But I think SLAPP suits are extremely important. For instance, I remember when the Honourable Tony Clement launched a suit against Dalton McGuinty, who was at that time the Leader of the Opposition. Some people said, "Well, that was just to cease criticism." I don't know if that's the case or not. I'm not going to impugn motives to Mr. Clement, but I did hear the opposition raise other cases so I thought it would be important to put that on the record.

The Great Lakes Protection Act: extremely important. I don't have to go into detail. I know some members of the Conservative caucus did have some concerns about it and they did express those concerns. Overall, I don't know how they're going to vote ultimately on it. That's their decision. But there were some who spoke in favour of certain provisions of it and some who thought there were changes that would be needed. I respect that very much.

The cessation of coal: The whole idea here is that if a government wanted to change that, it could not do it simply by a regulation of cabinet, but would require a piece of legislation passing this House if, indeed, they wanted to allow coal to be used for the production of electricity in the province again. I think that's a bill, again, that has a consensus of support in the House.

All of these bills are important, and as I say, it's something I look at and say—I can remember when I was environment minister, it seemed we were talking about these endlessly. One of the frustrations—and there are some advantages and disadvantages of a minority Parliament—was I think we only were able to get through about 36% of the bills that we introduced. I thought there was a problem with minority Parliament at that time. The best one, by the way, in my view, was between 1977 and 1981, when Premier Davis was the Premier. He had had a bad experience between 1975 and 1977. I think he learned from that experience, and so did the opposition. The government realized it had to be more responsive; the opposition realized it had to be more responsible. So I thought that worked.

We hadn't had experience with a true minority Parliament for a long time. If I were making a judgment, I didn't think the last minority Parliament worked that well. But, when you're in opposition, you certainly have a different view, and I understand that. It can work; it's not that it always has to fail. It can work and I did see it work quite well between 1977 and 1981. I think the problem was the government hadn't had experience for a long time with a minority Parliament and the opposition hadn't had that same experience. So the opposition, in our opinion, tend to be much more obstructive and delaying in its tactics and they probably felt the government wasn't being responsible enough—responsive enough—to their concerns.

But I do—along with my two colleagues, who will be speaking—want to see these bills proceed. This motion is a manner in which they will proceed in an orderly fashion and in a fashion that will ensure that they get

passed appropriately, after having had all the debate that they've had.

I'll now yield the floor to the next speaker, the Attorney General.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: It gives me great pleasure today to talk about Bill 52, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act in order to protect expression on matters of public interest.

What would this bill do, if passed? If passed, this bill would encourage healthy debate on issues of public interest by reducing the risk that citizens could be threatened with legal action when voicing legitimate viewpoints.

The proposed legislation would implement most of the panel's recommendations—because there was a panel who reviewed it. Key elements of the proposal involve:

(1) Implementing a fast-track review process for potentially strategic litigation under the Courts of Justice Act. This new process will allow the courts to quickly identify and deal with lawsuits that unduly restrict free expression in the public interest, minimizing costs and other hardships endured by the defendant.

(2) Extending "qualified privilege" in defamation law under the Libel and Slander Act. Currently, statements made by a person with a direct interest in a public interest matter to another person who also has a direct interest are privileged, so they do not give rise to liability for defamation. We are proposing to extend this privilege to cases where these communications were reported in the media or otherwise, e.g. discussed in a blog.

(3) Making procedural amendments to the Statutory Powers Procedure Act to avoid lengthy and expensive legal cost applications before an administrative tribunal.

How does this bill differ from the one introduced by former Attorney General John Gerretsen in 2013? The current proposal includes a few minor amendments to clarify the technical procedural components of the bill and change the application and commencement dates. In particular, the new bill includes amendments to clarify the appeals process respecting decisions to (a) dismiss lawsuits as strategic lawsuits and (b) stay related administrative proceedings; and limit the amount of time spent on cross-examinations to seven hours per side rather than seven hours per party.

Another effect of this amendment would be to apply the legislation only to those lawsuits begun after the introduction of the bill, so as not to interfere with ongoing litigation.

Last, it will change the effective date of the bill from the date of royal assent, instead of proclamation.

Mr. Speaker, one of the great things about living in a fair and democratic society is that we can speak out on matters that are important to us. By protecting citizens against strategic litigation, our government is standing up for the values the people of Ontario cherish. Using intimidation tactics to silence one's opponent is a misuse of our court system, one of the central institutions of a fair and democratic society.

If we prolong this debate to add nothing to the debate, there are people paying the price out there. If passed, this legislation will allow courts to quickly identify and deal with strategic lawsuits, minimizing the emotional and financial strain on defendants, as well as the waste of court resources.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Hon. Bill Mauro: A number of folks have already spoken to this programming motion in terms of exactly what it means and why it is here before us today. There's no real need for us to go into the details of the particular programming motion, so I won't do that. But as you've heard from a number of speakers already today, there are four bills that are contained within this particular programming motion, two of which I'll speak to briefly. One, of course, is the Invasive Species Act, which falls directly under my Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, that we're responsible for shepherding through the Legislature. We're excited by what that's going to bring to the table.

1430

Before I get to that and a few brief comments on that one, I wanted to talk a little bit about Bill 9, which is An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act to require the cessation of coal use to generate electricity at generation facilities. This was introduced in July 2014. There are at least a couple of reasons why I want to talk about that and the cessation of coal use in the province of Ontario. I begin by suggesting that in 2003, the election of 2003—that was the first year I was elected provincially after six years on Thunder Bay city council. In that election, all three political parties—the Conservative Party I think under Ernie Eves at the time, the NDP under Howard Hampton at the time and the Liberals under Dalton McGuinty at the time—made a very clear commitment that they would end coal-fired generation in the province of Ontario. We committed to and maintained that promise, and fulfilled that promise.

The reason I want to focus on that just briefly is that in the Legislature, on a consistent basis, we hear a fair bit about increasing energy rates in the province of Ontario. I would suggest that one of the fundamental reasons that energy rates have increased since 2003 is the commitment to closing coal—a commitment that was made by all three parties. Let's try and put some meat on the bones, so to speak.

In 2003, when we were elected, out of approximately 25,000 total megawatts of energy produced in the province of Ontario, about 6,000 of those megawatts were produced by burning coal. So somewhere in the neighbourhood of 20% to 25% of the total energy generated in the province of Ontario in 2003, when we were elected, at the time when all three parties made the same commitment to end coal—approximately 6,000 megawatts of energy had to be replaced. Remember, please, that all three political parties—the Conservatives under Ernie Eves, the NDP under Howard Hampton and the Liberals—made the same promise: "We're going to close

coal.” Well, coal was 6,000 megawatts of energy. So if you’re going to close 6,000 megawatts of energy, how are you going to replace it? And how are you going to pay for it? Because without saying it, when the Conservatives made the same commitment and when the NDP made the same commitment, they were committing to the costs associated with replacing 5,000 or 6,000 megawatts of energy—whatever the total was that we were getting from energy generated by the use of coal in the province of Ontario at that time.

So whenever we’re talking about seeing energy rates increase, we have to remember that a significant percentage of that increase since 2003—and if I had more time, I’d talk about reasons why much more of the increase would have happened under anybody’s circumstance. But we have to remember that implicit in that commitment in 2003 by the NDP and the Conservative Party was a commitment to cost and a commitment to energy rate increases because they were going to do exactly the same thing that we were. At least they had committed to do exactly the same thing. Some 5,000 to 6,000 megawatts of energy is not easily replaced. It costs you a lot of money to do that. It was a commitment that we made in 2003, and it was a commitment that we lived up to.

I think, at the end of the day, you won’t find too many people who were not supportive of that policy to get out of coal. In fact, many people are lauding and applauding Ontario all across the globe, certainly in Canada, for what we’ve done when it comes to closing coal. So there was an impact on rates as a result of it, but I repeat that it was a decision that has been lauded, and it was a rate increase that would have resulted, no matter which party had won the election in 2003 if, in fact, they would have followed through on that very same commitment. I think it’s important to highlight that, Speaker.

The other piece of legislation that I’ll highlight briefly in here that falls directly under my Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is the Invasive Species Act. This programming motion will set the table for, at the conclusion of second reading, the committee hearings that will go forward. We very much in our ministry look forward to the input that we are going to receive through the committee process on invasive species.

We had introduced this legislation, I think, first in February 2014. The election occurred in June 2014, and as a result of that, the Invasive Species Act needed to be reintroduced. We’ve done that. We’re moving through second reading, and when we get to committee, we’re very much interested in and looking forward to any suggestions that people may have.

The damage that invasive species do or create, Speaker, in our forests, in our water systems, is huge—I was about to say “incalculable,” but we can calculate what it does. When we look at the costs associated with zebra mussels being in our water systems over the last number of years, we have a number that we can attach to that. It’s a big number. It costs municipalities in the province of Ontario a great deal of money, on an annual basis, in

dealing with their water intake systems, as a result of zebra mussels finding their way into the province of Ontario.

There are other—even more serious, I would say—impending threats out there that we need to deal with. Carp: If carp get into the Great Lakes, what’s going to happen to our recreational and commercial fishing industry is hard to know, at this point. We need to do everything that we can do, as best we can, to prevent carp from finding their way into the Great Lakes.

The last one that I would mention, as the minister responsible for forestry, is the Asian pine beetle. We’ve seen and we can calculate the destruction that that pine beetle has created in BC. We know that it is moving east, as far as Manitoba or maybe Saskatchewan by now. Many are associating that migration with climate change. If that pine beetle finds its way into Ontario, as it has in the other provinces, we know the devastation that it can wreak on our forests as well.

The Invasive Species Act is a very important piece of legislation, and we look forward to getting it to committee, to hear what people have to offer.

Speaker, I thank you for your time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mrs. Gila Martow: I want to just say a quick hello; I believe it’s Bais Yaakov Elementary School up there. If I’m correct, wave to me. When I’m done talking, if we can meet outside, we’ll take a picture.

Interjection.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Yes.

I just want to say, Mr. Speaker, that there are a lot of reasons why people get involved in politics and manage to get themselves elected. I think that I’m one of the many people who were community persons, a bit of what you call grassroots activists. I was involved in a ratepayers’ association and other community groups. I’m one of those people who often wrote letters to the editor and probably provided a lot of entertainment for my friends and relatives. I got to know a lot of people who I now call friends in the York region area and even in Toronto who also, similar to me, were concerned with things in their community.

It’s very interesting, in Markham, how all the different ratepayers’ associations—they’re called the miracle group—get together and trade suggestions and often work together on things. We saw a lot of grassroots organized groups countering the mayor of Markham’s proposal for a very large-scale hockey arena in Markham. One of those activists, Karen Rea, actually got elected to council in the last round. Evelin Ellison is vice-president of the Thornhill ward 1 association. She is watching very closely and is very anxious to see new legislation in effect.

These are people who often have to use their own money to counter lawsuits. They are private individuals. They shouldn’t have to incorporate their ratepayers’ associations or homeowners’ groups in order to protect themselves from SLAPP lawsuits.

I think it's all about the spirit of democracy, Mr. Speaker. That's why we're here. We're here to ensure that people's voices are heard—our voices, yes, of course, but the general public. Often, when we're speaking here—and that's why I really did want to get up today—we're speaking on behalf of those not just in our constituency, but people who contact us from even outside our ridings who are concerned about many issues that they want us to propagate and speak about on their behalf. So it's really an honour and a privilege to speak on their behalf today.

I want to mention a few people who were slapped with lawsuits. It's a little surprising, because there were two Markham councillors, former councillor Erin Shapero and re-elected Valerie Burke, in the new Thornhill amalgamated large riding in Markham.

They were sued because they took photo ops for some newspaper articles on private property, because they were protesting a farm that was appealing for rezoning for development. That rezoning did not take place. All of the councillors in Markham voted against it, except for one, and they had to deal with this lawsuit.

1440

Erin Shapero did not put her name on the ballot in the next election and you have to really wonder why. Even though she's a lawyer, even though she was elected to council, possibly it was one of many factors that caused her to decide not to run for re-election and not to stay in public office. That would be very disappointing to me and, I think, to you, Mr. Speaker, if we were to think that people don't put their name forward for re-election on municipal councils because they're afraid of lawsuits.

Antony Niro is in Vaughan, north of my riding, and he's also a real grassroots—you might remember him from his yourbillion.ca campaign. He had a video campaign on YouTube. He got slapped with a lawsuit from a local developer just because he was questioning how councillors and the mayor of Vaughan were not questioning the lack of progress on a Vaughan hospital. Well, here we are years after his dealing with the SLAPP lawsuit, which was, thankfully, settled, but it was during the campaign period and they just wanted him to stay quiet for that one month or six weeks of the campaign period. He had to use his own financial resources. He had to appeal to his supporters to help him. Even though he had insurance, he didn't want to go through the insurance because the insurance, he knew, would tell him to cease and desist and want to settle, and he did not want to cease and desist.

The local newspaper, the Vaughan Citizen, was sued as well in his lawsuit, and they backed down. They wouldn't publish the ads that he was paying them to publish. They backed down and maybe they consulted with the newspaper guild and realized that they could be in trouble for refusing to publish somebody's articles just because they were afraid, as well, of getting sued.

We've created a climate where—we can talk about democracy all we want, but if people don't feel comfortable coming to our committees, contacting ministries,

contacting their local MPPs, if people don't feel comfortable writing those letters to the editor, then what kind of democracy do we have? I appeal to everybody here to keep that dialogue open. It's not just about passing motions and passing bills and having our debate in the House, but keeping the dialogue open with those people in our ridings, who—they may give us a hard time every now and then; we all have people who are there. But I think we also have a lot of respect for those individuals. Even though they're keeping our feet to the fire sometimes, I think that, oftentimes, maybe we deserve it. Maybe we do need to be reminded that we're elected to represent their interests, even if we may not always agree with their opinion and maybe not even agree with their methodology—but we are there to represent everybody and we need to express ourselves. Of course, we have our own opinions, but keep in mind that we're representing many in our constituency as well.

I never did seek to incorporate the Beverley Glen Ratepayers Association, of which I was president at one time, but I did start looking into it and hadn't quite gotten to the point of progressing with it when I decided to put my name on a ballot. The ratepayers' association is still active; actually, my son Josh is now president.

Mr. Bill Walker: Soo. Soo—

Mrs. Gila Martow: So if this legislation wasn't proceeding, I may have to—he yelled “Soo” and I just realized, I thought he was yelling that somebody should sue somebody, and it's just somebody's first name. Maybe that's a scary first name to have in some circumstances in politics. Thankfully, I'm not getting sued; we just have a member in the government whose first name is Soo, so don't get scared. I don't want the kids to get scared up there.

We want to have that input, even from the kids. When I was campaigning, there was a girl—and I have a feeling she was from Eitz Chaim, not from Bais Yaakov—in grade 5 and she was studying government at the time. She was holding a debate with her class during the campaign period and she was very excited to recognize me just walking on the street, canvassing. She said to her mother, “That's Gila Martow.” Her mother kind of didn't believe her, but she rolled down the window and asked. We took a picture, which she showed her teacher, and I hope she got extra marks.

Apparently, she represented me in the class debate. She did send me a message that she won the debate—thankfully, or maybe I wouldn't have won the election, because I saw it as kind of a premonition. But I saw her as a future activist, as somebody I want to see involved in the issues, writing letters to the editor, contacting politicians and getting engaged on her student council. I want her to do it in a climate without fear, without concern about SLAPP lawsuits and without concern for her reputation, that somehow future employers might consider her some kind of liability—somebody who gets in trouble and gets sued a lot.

We want to encourage kids to come and visit us here at Queen's Park, but also to maybe have an exercise

where they write a letter to the editor—or how about writing a letter to me and telling me what you learned today and what issues you think we should be concerned about here at Queen's Park on your behalf in the future?

We're also talking, today, about invasive species, which means foreign species of animals—they mentioned zebra mussels before, which I've cut my feet on many times, and maybe you, too. When you go to the lakes, you're told to wear those water shoes that kind of aren't very fashionable, but we do wear them, because we don't want to get cut on our feet.

We're talking about ending coal plants in Ontario. Obviously, the people of Ontario and all three parties in the Legislature have no interest in opening new coal plants. We might question why gas plants couldn't have been put where coal plants were, but we're certainly not interested in opening up more coal plants. I think we all want to have clean water and clean air for future generations, and get them engaged without worrying about SLAPP lawsuits.

Thank you very much for the time, Mr. Speaker.

Interjection.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I'm sharing my time. Did I have to say something at the beginning? I should have said that I'm sharing my time with the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I'll allow it. The member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to provide some comment on these bills as well.

I'm going to start, if I can, with Bill 37, the Invasive Species Act. There has been substantial media attention given, in recent years, to invasive species such as Asian carp. My caucus colleague for Haldimand-Norfolk, Toby Barrett, has done a great job speaking very consistently on Asian carp and calling for immediate government action. This bill addresses some of those concerns, but the fact remains that Bill 37 needs work.

I received significant feedback from constituents in my riding who are part of the Great Lakes communities and see first-hand the damage our waters have sustained. This damage has been estimated to cost \$7.5 billion annually to forestry and farming.

The concerns about the Invasive Species Act that I received from my local anglers and hunters and farmers are as follows:

The bill does not outline a science-based approach to risk management, risk assessment and decision-making.

The bill is punitive and presents fairness issues.

The act downloads the responsibility for implementation to landowners, leaving little incentive for landowners to act. This is a big concern, from the perspective of, what's the real damage? What's the real ability for them to come through? They are the stewards of the land; they are the people who want to protect it. But they have to be very cautious of what the costs can be to a small, little farming operation to be able to actually do all the things that might be expected of them.

Ontario's enforcement officers are under-equipped to adequately deal with existing legislation. Again—kind of pertinent to timing—we wanted to just talk a little bit about the bear problems we've experienced in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound over the last number of years. It's fairly timely today, with what happened here in the city and a bear being shot. The bill does not provide more resources to handle inspections. Again, the challenge becomes, what about enforcement; what about accountability? It's one thing to make legislation, but we need to follow up to ensure that everyone knows it is a safe playing field and it is going to be abided by.

The bill further removes property rights from landowners and prevents landowners from proactively dealing with invasive species. Again, we want to give them that flexibility and latitude to ensure that they've actually had the time and the input, as stakeholders, to truly be consulted.

We feel that the bill is reactionary, and not proactive, in regard to invasive species. Of course, my constituents were hoping to have the opportunity to voice their concerns, and are disappointed that the Liberals are forcing closure on this bill and three others without what we feel is adequate debate and public consultation. My constituents are very convinced that this is because the government does not want to discuss those red flags with respect to inspection powers and some of the other challenges in regard to how it gets implemented, who does the verification, who does the check, and what's the ongoing cost and burden to adhere to some of these regulations and guidelines. It's why the government allocated a total of just two days for public hearings on Bill 37. For a government to repeatedly use the phrases, "We want to dialogue," and, "We're continuing conversations," this about-face is a travesty to all Ontarians—may I have two waters, please?

1450

I want to talk about Bill 66 as well, the Great Lakes Protection Act. As you have no doubt heard us say in this House, the Ontario PC caucus is fully supportive of improving and protecting our Great Lakes ecosystems, and I am standing on record today, Mr. Speaker. I am surrounded by the Great Lakes. They're one of our greatest natural resources. Who would not want to ensure that we do protection in the right manner for all our benefit going down the road? But at the end of the day, again, we have concerns in regard to, not the idea or the intent of the bill, but the implementation and what it really means to the people it will be impacting.

Again, my constituents, the great folks in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, and a lot of those people as well that come into our area that are cottagers, that are seasonal residents, that are weekend guests, also come up and provide this type of input, and share the concerns with what is really going on.

So we're concerned about the duplication of governance; the lack of funding to implement initiatives—very similar to the invasive species bill. The first time this bill was actually brought out, Mr. Speaker, I raised that flag

because I was very concerned that at that point it was going to be an appointed guardians' council that would actually be appointed, not democratically elected like the people who create the legislation—me being one of those privileged to do that in this House. We wanted to make sure that it was going to be, again, pragmatic and realistic and not something that is going to impose on a municipality that couldn't afford to truly implement all the things. Even if they wanted to do it in their own heart, there are limitations.

If it's only going to be steamrolled—as we've seen with a number of different things under this government—we're concerned about the removal of local planning and putting decision-making powers with provincial appointees. As I just mentioned, it's one thing to be able to have people who are advisory to be able to give you some feedback, but at the end of the day, I stand very strongly convinced that we as the democratically elected legislators should have the final say in these things going forward; it shouldn't be done through regulations, through an appointed body that can be definitely stacked in favour of the government of the day.

Thank you very much, Kerry. I appreciate that. She's one of our great pages here, as they all are.

Hon. Dipika Damerla: From the great riding of Mississauga East—Cooksville.

Mr. Bill Walker: She's from that great riding, is she? Wonderful. Mississauga East—Cooksville—wonderful, wonderful.

I believe the Rural Ontario Municipal Association echoed all of these concerns in its report entitled the Rural and Northern Lens. Specifically, the report asks the Liberal government to answer a set of questions in response to this and other legislation to bring forward items that threaten to destabilize rural economies. I would like to remind you of those test questions:

(1) Does this benefit or hinder the fiscal realities of rural and northern Ontario?

(2) Has a business case been created that accounts for low and sparse populations?

(3) Will it enhance opportunities in rural and northern Ontario?

(4) Will it help or hinder goals of sustainability blending environmental, social and economic factors?

(5) Will it consider how and if rural people will be able to access it?

(6) Will it consider all options for delivery, ensuring efficiency, the potential for co-delivery and an acceptable administrative impact on municipalities?

(7) Will it account for the needs of special populations, such as youth, elderly and immigrants?

(8) Will it have adequate human and financial resources to be able to be effective?

(9) Will it ensure that rural and northern communities are receiving equitable treatment or services relative to other areas in the province?

(10) Will it recognize the geography, weather and scale of rural and northern Ontario and include adjusted program criteria to accommodate these realities?

(11) Will it accommodate the aspirations of residents from rural communities and the north?

(12) Will it build upon the input and advice of rural residents, communities and municipalities?

One of the concerns with a lot of the things that we see being imposed by this government is the reality of the local municipality and thus the taxpayer—and as we all know there is only one taxpayer—to be able to implement this. It's wonderful to bring out good ideas with good intent, and the ideology in many cases is correct, but at the end of the day there has to be a pragmatic reality of implementation and the ability for people to be able to afford all things.

There are a lot of things out there that are imposed, like the Green Energy Act, that are having significant, detrimental, negative impacts, Mr. Speaker, on the local municipality, and I don't believe that there was proper consultation.

Last year I was involved with the Stop the Drop campaign—and I credit Colin Dobell for bringing that initiative forward—during the severely low water levels in the Great Lakes communities such as Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. Falling water levels were hurting local businesses and tourism in my great riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. The Chi-Cheemaun ferry was delayed due to the declining water levels and lack of dredging of the bays. A total of 44 communities met with my caucus to talk about the impact of declining water levels on businesses and livelihoods. I was glad to see that again Mother Nature has intervened in this case and we've had rising water levels. We don't certainly have the same issue we had—and let's hope that those continue going forward. What we tried to avoid there was a knee-jerk reaction to do something, and in this case Mother Nature has come through.

The next version of Stop the Drop was persuading the public to take action to protect our shorelines from the phragmites invasion. Phragmites are like Asian carp with roots. Invasive phragmites can grow up to five metres tall and can grow in soil, in water, and even through asphalt. I saw a photo just recently of this along Highway 400 in the Port Severn area. Unfortunately, this bill too will be open to public hearings for just two days.

My concern, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Ontario is a lack of proper debate and a lack of engagement of the people who are actually going to pay the freight and be most impacted by these types of bills. It's not only people from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound who would like to have their say on these bills; in fact, it's people from every corner of this province. But this government is ensuring that they don't. So much for the Premier's promise of partnership as opposed to partisanship.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, all of these bills—again, I want to reiterate that the PC caucus and certainly myself are very support of Great Lakes protection. We all value it. We have to have our Great Lakes and the great clean drinking water that we have from them for the health of all of our people. But we have to do so in a

balanced, managed, pragmatic manner. We have to ensure that we're not imposing things from a body like a guardians' council that would be appointed, not democratically elected like all of us are, and is going to impose things on other people who have no right to challenge it or even to stand up against it for fear of recrimination. So we need to ensure that we do that.

In the case, certainly, of the invasive species, as I just said, I'm very concerned about something like phragmites. We need to be taking action, and we need to do that with deliberate, managed approaches, but we have to do it with great consultation. Ramming these things through with only a couple of days of debate, like they have a number of things, time-allocating them when it really is an opportunity for the public to be engaged, for them to be more aware, for them to buy in and be part of the solution—to be able to adopt and harness their enthusiasm and their support of this type of legislation is absolutely critical. I hope the government will listen to this and will actually open up the lines of communication and consultation much further and much broader in future.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'll only take a few minutes to put a few comments on the record regarding the motion that was tabled by the government. There is a lot of work that gets done in this place that defies any sort of logic whatsoever. This is a prime example of why this place sometimes makes no sense.

You have a majority government who decided to show their strength, flex their muscle, show the opposition who's the boss here and who has all the good ideas by putting forward a motion that would actually slow the process down, not accelerate it, on bills that were ready to be voted upon. Rather than letting the process be, they show their muscle because they are in favour of the environment, and they're going to show everybody how in favour of the environment they are by putting forward a motion that we have to debate that slows the whole thing down.

That makes no sense, Speaker. That makes no sense. You have to look at the bills—and this is a new low, for all I'm concerned: a motion that will time-allocate four bills that if we had let the House do their work would already have been through and back here and voted upon and done with. But no, no, we couldn't let good enough alone. We had to show that we had a strong majority government that could push things through no matter how bad those New Democrats and PCs are. They know they're right and we are wrong, and that's all there is to this.

This is all for none. This is all for none. This is all a show for—I don't know who are the spectators to this thing, but it doesn't serve any good. It doesn't achieve any purpose. It doesn't do anything except for being able to show on a piece of paper that, yes, they have tabled a motion that says that An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act to require the cessation of coal use to

generate electricity at generation facilities—we had already debated that, Speaker. We were already at 6.5 hours of debate. Everything that needed to be said had been said. All sides of the House agreed, beside the fact that those stations are already shut down. It's not like there's a big urgency to pass a bill to shut them down, because the work is already done. But we have the big, burly Liberal government in its majority that will be able to show us little NDPers and PCs that they have a monopoly on good environmental protection, and they're going to push this bill through the House when we should not be talking about those kinds of closure motions. We should be voting on those bills and they should be receiving royal assent—be done with it and move on with our lives. But no, no, we have to have this talk, apparently, so that they can show us how good they are for the environment.

1500

All sides of the House don't want us to use coal anymore. We all know what it does to people's health when the air we breathe is laden with all sorts of toxins. We have fumes that choke people, and we have emergency rooms full of kids with asthma who can't breathe anymore because coal-fired generation is going on.

Then, we have another environmentally friendly bill, An Act respecting Invasive Species. I haven't talked to all 107 of us in this House, but it would be hard to find an MPP who is in favour of more zebra mussels into our waterways. It would be really hard to find an MPP who would be in favour of bringing those giant carp into our waterways. I haven't found one, Speaker, but if there's one out there, please get on the record quickly because you had six and a half hours to speak to this bill. It was supposed to be brought back the next day so that we could vote on it. But no, the big, strong majority Liberals are going to put it on the record that they're going to push this bill through when, if they had not done this, the bill would already be at third reading, and if the Lieutenant Governor were in the House, it would already have received royal assent and we would be done with it. But no, that was not good enough. They had to be on the record that we were bad and they were good, and that's all we have to do.

The third bill, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act in order to protect expression on matters of public interest—I've never called that bill that way. It's the anti-SLAPP bill. This is a bill that my leader introduced. This is a bill that the NDP have been pushing forward. Do you really think we need the Liberals to time-allocate this bill, to tell us that it should make it to the finish line? I don't think so, Speaker. We would have liked this bill to make it to the finish line two Parliaments ago—the Parliament before this and this Parliament, absolutely.

Same thing: It was weird, because all three of those bills had already reached the six and a half hours—I mention six and a half hours because this is the magic number where you can send the bill forward, and there's

an automatic ask of the government if we want to continue to debate. All they have to say is no and voilà.

Then the fourth bill, Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin—here again, protecting our Great Lakes, protecting the watershed that goes with it. This is the part that I hate the most about this place. There are a few things that I'm not too happy with, but shenanigans like this—I can't stand this. This is a complete waste of our time. Think about it: We are 107 leaders. Every single one of the 13.5 million people who live in Ontario is being represented by the 107 members who sit in this House. How do we use our time together? We use our time together not for the betterment of our province; we use our time together to get poked in the eye by a majority government that says, "We will force you to do something that you were already wanting to do and trying to get done, but we will be able to tell the world that we did this because we are a big, strong majority. You little NDPer and you little PC, it doesn't matter what you guys thought because we used our big, powerful muscles to muscle this through the House because we believe in the environment with a capital E," and you guys don't understand anything about the environment.

Well, I'm sorry Speaker, this disgusts me. This was completely unnecessary. This is not the type of bill we should be debating four days before this House rises. We should be discussing issues within those bills; we should be putting on the record what we want about those bills. But, no, instead we have this macho show of power that I can't stand. This contest to see who can piss the farthest—I have no desire to take part in those things, but this is what's happening right now, this is what this—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I think I have to ask the member if she could possibly rephrase that last reference.

Interjections.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Sorry, Speaker. They were talking to me.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): If you could rephrase that last, previous reference.

Miss Monique Taylor: You want to see who can flex their muscles the largest.

M^{me} France Gélinas: This is a motion to see who can flex their muscles the largest. Is this better? Okay. In a majority government, or at any other time, I have no desire to enter into those contests.

Am I competitive? Oh, absolutely, I'm a competitive person. I row competitively, I race competitively. I have it in me to compete. Bring me to a racecourse and you will see what competitiveness is all about. I love it.

Interjections.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I wakeboard as well, yes, and I will wakeboard again. I don't let a little crushed tibial plateau slow me down.

But this is completely useless. This is not competing for something that will bring you closer to a goal; this is a complete waste of our time, a complete waste of

goodwill. If we were to use this time debating this useless motion listening to one another instead, if we were to use this time wisely for the benefit of Ontarians, great things could happen. When all 107 of us are here together, great things could happen because you have the leadership of the entire province in one room. We know what's going on in our ridings; we can move things forward to make sure that every Ontarian moves along with it. Beautiful things could happen, but none of that happened—none of that. Instead, we have motions like this that are completely useless—unless they want to talk to someone and show that they have done something, something that was completely useless, but they still wanted to do that.

It disappoints me; it turns me off of this place like nobody's business. I hate this, Speaker. But, more and more, we see this happening. We see this happening where we have a majority government that decides to time-allocate things that nobody wants to talk about anymore, which we're willing to move on, that wants to flex their muscles to show they are getting things done, when really, had they taken the time to talk to us, we would have got things done faster.

We want those bills to go through. We've wanted those bills to go through for a long time. Some of them my leader has pushed forward. Do you really think that we would put a bill on the record and do all the work necessary, use your lonely little time slot for second reading for a bill that we did not want to move forward? Where would that come from? Where does that come from?

Anyway, here we are with this motion that we'll be debating this afternoon, rather than debating something of substance. We will end up going through the motion that would bring those bills to the finish line, when we could have passed some of those already today and be done with them and build a little bit of goodwill within this House and show that, in some instances—and those are perfect bills to show this—we all agree. Those are bills that will be good for the people of Ontario. Take time to listen to the people of Ontario, and together, we can do anything.

1510

But no, this is meant to divide; this is meant to say that one side is right, with a capital R, and the other side is wrong, with a capital W; that only the government has good ideas and can move good things forward and that the opposition would not see paradise if we fell into it.

This is wrong. This is not the way we should conduct ourselves in this House. Frankly, for people who look from the outside, this is what turns people off. I'm always sorry when I see that by our own actions, we're actually pushing people away from their democracy. Democracy wins when everybody feels connected, when they look at their leader and they have—

Applause.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Yes—and they have reason to be proud of our actions and the way we behave and the way that we bring things forward.

Will we always agree? No, of course not. If you take any group of people, there is always dissenting opinion.

But when you take the time to listen, when you take the time to move forward, what brings us together? What is it that we have in common that could bring all of Ontario forward? Then we all win. We all win.

But none of this is going on this afternoon, Speaker. This afternoon, we have a show of muscle from the Liberal Party for something that did not need any time allocation or muscle-showing or anything of the sort. We should be there by now, and the fact that we're not is because we have this motion in front of us—not my finest day in this Legislature, Speaker. I hope, as we go forward, we're not going to see too many of those.

You know, I sit down there and I try to understand who they could be talking to who really wants this. I would say every Ontarian agrees that they want this bill, together, but this manoeuvring, that only people who know how the Legislative Assembly process works—what do they owe them that we have to go through this rigmarole to move those bills forward? Who is listening to this motion for whom it would make any sense that we have this motion forward? It makes no sense. Whatever they told you about, “We will move this motion forward and this way the Great Lakes will be protected and the SLAPP will go forward and the invasive species will move forward and the cleaner coal will move forward”—let me tell you, they did not do you a favour. Much to the opposite: Had they let those bills go through, we would already have this legislation.

This is just a big show so that someplace, somewhere, they can tell people that they moved coal and they moved SLAPP and they moved the protection of the Great Lakes and they moved the other one that I keep forgetting—the invasive species. Those would have all reached the finish line without this motion. This is not necessary, and it is sad. It is sad because what it really shows is, it shows the divide. It shows that as leaders, we haven't learned to talk to one another. We haven't learned to listen to one another.

When we all say the same thing, when we all say that those bills are good and should move forward, why don't we let them go forward the way that it's supposed to? Because you have to realize, Speaker, that to open them up for public debate—after second reading a bill goes to committee and goes to public debate. There is tremendous value in that. The tremendous value is that anybody who lives in Ontario can come and talk to us. They can e-mail us, they can send us letters, they can ask to connect and they can have their say. This is what makes us a democracy. This is what makes us strong and proud of being Ontarians.

All of this process kind of gets swept a little bit under the rug when you have public hearings and clause-by-clause within the same day. How many changes do you figure you can do to a bill when you have your public hearings and your clause-by-clause the same day, and then you report back? It sort of sidesteps a very important process of our Legislature. Anyway, it is what it is—nothing to be proud of.

Will we be supporting those four bills? Yes, absolutely. Will we be supporting a motion that shows how

strong and powerful the mighty Liberal government is? Not so sure, Speaker. Not so sure.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Did you indicate you were sharing your time?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I did—maybe not loud enough. But I will now: I'm sharing my time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Okay. I think I will allow it again.

The member for Hamilton Mountain.

Miss Monique Taylor: I'm always pleased to be able to stand in this House and have the ability to speak up on things that come before us, and to stand up for the people in my riding and people across this province, when they contact me to do so.

Today, we have this programming motion in front of us that really is about stifling the debate. It's about quieting people, to be able to push through their agenda, and yet, as the member before me said, we all agree on all of the bills that are here. So why is it that the government feels that it needs to stifle the debate, that it needs to push things forward, push it through as quickly as they can, and stop the debate process from happening—which is an important part of our legislative process. It's the checks and balances.

If the government spent as much time on the Hydro sale, and talking to the people of this province in a consultation process, maybe they wouldn't waste so much time on silly games here in the Legislature.

We will be supporting these bills, but there was no reason to put them through this process.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Arthur Potts: It's a great pleasure of mine to speak to the programming motion now that is before the House. The pieces of legislation contained in this motion are, of course, very, very important, and we look forward to moving them forward as part of our plan to build Ontario up. We need to move forward with them in an expeditious fashion.

I was delighted to listen to the member from Timmins—James Bay speak at length about this. For the opposition party's House leader to speak so co-operatively about the opportunities, that their side of the House wants to move forward with these bills, was heartening. We know that his leader brought some of these motions before in the past. We know there's widespread support on that side of the House. It's absolutely delightful to all of us to know that there will be widespread support for moving these bills forward and, through this motion, an opportunity to move them forward more expeditiously than I think the members opposite are giving us credit for.

As a House leader, he knows—and he's had those discussions with the House leaders of the official opposition, the House leader of the party. Obviously, we've come to an impasse where we've had to determine that if we want to get this House's agenda through in an expeditious manner, this is the best way to go forward.

The member from Nickel Belt spoke at great length about this great jousting contest, this show of power.

Frankly, if you look at the history of so many of these motions that have been before this House in the past, they didn't get passed in previous Parliaments with a minority status because the co-operation wasn't there. So the history somewhat belies that fake sense of confidence that the members opposite are putting forward, because the history is just not showing that they were prepared to move forward on these things in the past.

These are four very important bills that are being put forward. Bill 9, An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act—

Interruption.

Mr. Arthur Potts: Oh, and I am sharing my time with the member from Scarborough and the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Thank you, page.

It's always delightful to get reminded, with the enthusiasm when you stand up first in the House, that I am sharing my time, all in due course, as we move forward.

We do have Bill 9, An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act to require the cessation of coal use to generate electricity at generation facilities—an important act. As we know, that's the number one source of greenhouse gas emissions reductions that have happened in this province, and it's been an extremely, extremely positive thing that we were able to move forward with.

Bill 37, An Act respecting Invasive Species: We heard the member from Owen Sound speak quite eloquently on how important that piece of legislation is to go forward. We will be moving forward with it as well.

1520

Of course, Bill 52, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act—I have a very good friend, David Donnelly of the Canadian Environmental Defence Fund, who probably was the individual who spearheaded the importance of having this kind of legislation when he was trying to work with a community group in defending against a large development. That was the response of the developer: to come after him personally, to come after his law firm, to come after the community with very expensive litigation, which had an incredible chilling effect on their capacity to be able to bring forward their concerns about the development. It's important that that piece of legislation comes forward as well.

Finally, of course, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin: As we've heard—and we've all had a chance to speak on this issue in the past—there is widespread support for this, but we are not operating in a vacuum. The reality is that the co-operation hasn't been here to move the business of this House forward as expeditiously as we would like. We saw that evidence again today. When the opportunity came down, we brought a motion to extend debate to midnight. Despite the protestations of the House leader for the third party that he wants to be co-operative, that party, once again, voted against doing the business of this House in an extended fashion. The reality is we need to

move forward with this legislation. You had a chance to come forward and you didn't want to do it.

All of us have had a very productive session in the last many, many weeks, and this is, hopefully, going to be the week before we can rise, but we need to get some of this legislation past us, on the table, going forward.

The House leader complained at length about curtailing debate. Within the House, this may have the impact of curtailing debate on these bills that we have widespread unanimous agreement on, but they're all individually going forward to committees, committees where there will be extensive opportunities for the public to comment on them.

I know that, for instance, the cessation of coal act—

Interjections.

Mr. Arthur Potts: The cessation of coal act, contrary to the heckling, is currently scheduled for three days in the general government committee. Three days—I'm seeing it right here. We have three days where we will be able to bring people in to talk about the cessation of coal. We'll have the environmentalists of this province coming out and telling us what an incredible thing it was when we reduced coal, and then move forward.

The Great Lakes Protection Act, also going to the general government committee, is slated for four days of committee hearings. I challenge the members opposite to tell us that that is stifling debate. The reality is that in four days of hearings, there will be tremendous opportunities for people across the province who have an interest in protecting the Great Lakes basin and protecting the St. Lawrence River basin—they will have a chance to come forward and make their views known. That's extremely important.

The Invasive Species Act: Once again, as the members opposite have talked about, there is great support for this. We will have a chance to hear from the people of Ontario in what I'm understanding to be four days in committee. In the social policy committee, for four days we'll be sitting to hear from the people and go through a clause-by-clause review of that act. I think that's extremely important. I think we need to recognize that this is not stifling debate. This is, in fact, broadening opportunities for Ontarians to have meaningful input on these bills in the fall.

Finally, a committee that I sit on—justice policy—will be receiving the anti-SLAPP legislation. We'll have a chance—again, four days of review of that bill at committee, for the people of Ontario to come forward and have their say.

I know that we only got something in the order of 36% of the bills forward during the last minority Parliament, and now we're moving forward. Yes, we have a majority situation because that's what the province of Ontario gave us. They were frustrated with this lack of co-operation they got from the other side and they said, "You know what? We need a government in power who can bring forward a piece of legislation that will listen to the province of Ontario, listen to the people of Ontario, and come forward with meaningful legislation."

With that, I'd like to turn over my time to the member from Scarborough—Agincourt.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Scarborough—Agincourt.

Ms. Soo Wong: Good afternoon. I'm very pleased this afternoon to be given an opportunity to speak in support of the programming motion before the House. As my colleague previously said, we're talking about four bills before us: Bill 9, An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act to require the cessation of coal use to generate electricity at generation facilities; Bill 37, An Act respecting Invasive Species; Bill 52, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act in order to protect expression on matters of public interest; and Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin.

In my limited time for debate on this particular motion, I'm going to focus specifically on Bill 9. As a former nurse, I know the importance of this particular bill to the health of every Ontarian in this province.

Last year, on July 9, the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change introduced first reading. We're now still talking about Bill 9, so for the opposition to claim that we are rushing this to the finish line—I would challenge them. This is a very important piece of legislation to the health of every Ontarian.

Through the proposed legislation, if passed, we are committed to reinforce the end of use of coal at existing generating facilities and ensure that any new stand-alone generating stations will not use coal. The reason why we're concerned about this is because of significant health, environmental and, more importantly, financial costs associated with the use of coal.

The other piece, I want to remind every member of the Legislature—I'm going to quote from Louise Comeau, who is the executive director of Climate Action Network Canada. In her statement, she claims that all levels of governments—as well as individual Canadians—must make a priority of the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

If we pass this proposed legislation, we are in effect reducing the largest emitters of greenhouse gas in this province, which in fact contribute to global climate change.

The other editorial recently in the *Toronto Star* talks about this. It talks about the Premier signing the accord with the province of Quebec, as well as California dealing with a cap-and-trade initiative. But also, in the editorial in the *Toronto Star* dated April 14—I'm going to quote. This is what it says here: "Wynne's bold move breathes life into Ontario's principled decision in 2008 to set a price on carbon when it signed the Western Climate Initiative with Quebec, British Columbia and California. It means that more than 75% of Canadians will soon live in a province with some form of carbon pricing to discourage the burning of fossil fuels. And this is the second time Ontario has shown leadership where the Harper government has not. Much of Canada's modest

progress to date has stemmed from Ontario's decision to close coal-fired hydro plants."

So Mr. Speaker, I would say—

Hon. Jeff Leal: Harper is taking the credit for it?

Ms. Soo Wong: No, he's not taking credit.

The editorial is clearly saying that our initiative to close the coal-fired plants is helping with the carbon and the greenhouse gas emissions.

The other piece is—if my colleagues are not listening to these editorials, maybe they will listen to the German ambassador. This weekend he publicly criticized the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Environment in Ottawa—

Hon. Jeff Leal: Brian Mulroney?

Ms. Soo Wong: No, Mr. Harper—criticizing the government of Canada for not doing their part in dealing with the whole issue of greenhouse emissions.

Mr. Speaker, you don't have to look far. Living in an international community, we know Germany is leading the way when it comes to green energy, yet our own federal government is sitting on the sidelines. I'm going to quote here: "... Ottawa's announcement it plans to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions to 30% below 2005 levels by 2030, arguing it failed to outline any measures targeting the oil sands." It is very clear: The province is now leading the way, not the federal government. The feds usually lead in partnership with the provincial government. So this proposed legislation, when we pass Bill 9, is very important to every Ontarian's home, every Ontarian's household but, most importantly, every Ontarian's health.

1530

The other piece is that the opposition third party and my colleague from Beaches—East York already commented about the fact that by delaying passage of not just Bill 9 but Bill 37, Bill 52 and Bill 66—Ontarians expect this chamber to pass legislation that matters to them. At the end of the day, delayed passage—and as I already said earlier, Mr. Speaker, on July 9, 2014, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change did first reading, and we're still debating this particular bill.

At the end of the day, we need to move forward to protect every Ontarian's health.

So now I'm going to turn my remaining time to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I'm pleased to recognize the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to say, you being in the chair today, that we had a delightful opportunity last Thursday. I was in your wonderful company at Elora, Ontario, for the opening of the new dairy agricultural research station in the lovely community of Elora. I want to thank you sincerely, Mr. Speaker, for your very kind hospitality, being in your riding. It was a great day.

But I'd also like to say today that my wife, Karan, and I are particularly pleased that our daughter, Shanae,

who's 15 years old, a grade 10 student at St. Peter's high school in Peterborough, is competing in OFFSA tennis this afternoon at York University. So I know all of us in this chamber wish our daughter very well as she competes with other students right across the province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, before you admonish me for not following the rules, you know that I have to get to the motion here today about things that are happening in the Legislature. I want to take the opportunity—because this is something that's very important in the great riding of Peterborough: the Invasive Species Act.

Of course, in Peterborough, we're very proud that it's the headquarters of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters. The executive director, one Angelo Lombardo, is a good friend of mine. I do know that the Invasive Species Act is very important to both our recreational fishery in the province of Ontario and those, of course, who are in fish processing etc. We're always very concerned about a number of invasive species that might make their way—particularly coming in from the States, up the Mississippi River—into the Great Lakes and, ultimately, find themselves in the wonderful Kawartha Lakes.

This has always been extremely important to me because of the Trent Severn system that runs right through the heart of Peterborough. In fact, where I live on Maniece Avenue in Peterborough is exactly a stone's throw away from the world-renowned Peterborough lift lock, which is over 107 years old. It's one of the great wonders of the world. People come from all over the world to see and visit the Peterborough lift lock.

There's also one in the riding of my good friend from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock at Kirkfield, Ontario, but the one in Peterborough is all made out of concrete and the one in Kirkfield, Ontario, is a steel structure. That's what makes the one in Peterborough so unique.

The reason that we want to keep it and the Trent-Severn Waterway as a great place for people to visit—we want to keep invasive species out of that area. Over the years, we've had challenges, of course, first of all with zebra mussels. Now, the zebra mussel, Mr. Speaker, as you know, is quite the interesting critter. They actually came into the Great Lakes from grey water that was pumped out of ships that were travelling the Great Lakes, got into the waters of the Great Lakes, and then eventually made their way right up into the Kawartha Lakes. Mr. Speaker, as you well know—you chat with your municipal colleagues—zebra mussels have a terrible habit of collecting on water intake pipes. They actually clog up the water intake pipes and create serious problems for municipalities right across the province of Ontario. Indeed, they jeopardize the generation of electricity from running water, and in fact, with both Darlington and Pickering, have jeopardized the operation of those nuclear plants, because of the water intake pipes. So that's something that we need to be very worried about.

The other one that I will spend some time talking about today is the emerald ash borer. It came to Ontario—it's rather interesting. There were pallets that

came from China. The emerald ash borer was contained in those pallets. The pallets crossed into Canada at Windsor, Ontario, and of course the emerald ash borer spread very, very quickly throughout southwestern Ontario.

I saw a couple of airplane photos. Pat Hoy—you'd remember Mr. Hoy very well, the former member from Chatham-Kent-Essex. I remember him showing us pictures that were taken by the MNR to see the marching of emerald ash borers, starting at the Detroit-Windsor border and then making their way on an eastward swath throughout Chatham-Kent-Essex and, in their devastation, destroying magnificent ash trees in that part of Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, you're probably old enough, as I am, to remember when Dutch elm disease made its way through the province of Ontario and destroyed stately stands of magnificent elm trees in every community right across this province. You'd be hard-pressed today to find an elm tree in many parts of the province of Ontario. That's why, for the life of me, I can't understand why there has been some filibustering to stop a great bill like the Invasive Species Act, to—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Oh, what filibustering? You're filibustering your own bills.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Oh, no, Mr. Speaker. I'm getting some comment from the people, so I—

Interjections.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Oh, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Do you still want to do a point of order? The time is up.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: On a point of order—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Point of order.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The Liberals are filibustering their own bills.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That's not a point of order.

Further debate?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It's my pleasure to join debate today on this programming motion. I want to start by saying that there are other members of the Progressive Conservative caucus who would like the opportunity to speak. They are Mr. Miller from Parry Sound-Muskoka, Mr. Pettapiece from Perth-Wellington and Mr. Bailey from Sarnia. I know that they'll add their voice on some of the big challenges of today.

I must say at the outset: My colleague from the Nickel Belt area lamented the fact that we are now in the last week of this session and we are dealing with a programming motion, with some very substantive issues in the province of Ontario to deal with. She lamented that fact because she felt that we're debating a programming motion today and, in fact, we would be better served if we were debating an issue, or a number of issues or pieces of legislation on the future of the province of Ontario. I couldn't agree with her more.

From time to time, we agree with different parties in the assembly, as Progressive Conservatives. Sometimes

we share our view with the Liberals, sometimes with the New Democrats; sometimes we go it alone. But in this particular case, where we're time-allocated and we are using a programming motion, I am tending to agree with my colleagues in the third party, because there is a great deal of debate in the province today that we should be discussing.

Predominantly, primarily, the biggest issue by far, regardless of what community you're from in Ontario, is hydro. It's the cost of hydro. It's the oversight of Hydro One. It's the smart meters. It is the impact of the global adjustment. It is the wind turbine policies through the Green Energy Act. It is the sale of Hydro One. By far, regardless of which community you live in, wherever you work, whatever your economic circumstances, the people of Nepean-Carleton and the people of the rest of the province of Ontario have that on the top of their mind.

Therefore, I think it's incumbent upon the government to allow members of this assembly, regardless of where they come from, regardless of what part of Ontario they represent or from which political party they come, to have an opportunity to have that discussion.

1540

Earlier today, I had a question in the Legislature. I urged the government to remove the sale of Hydro One, that fire sale/asset sale, from the budget so that we, as members of this assembly, would have the opportunity—I wasn't the first person to raise this issue. In fact, I'll give the credit to the leader of the third party. I'll give the credit to the leader of the official opposition. That was the appropriate approach and response, I believe, to an asset sale that won't be \$1 billion or \$2 billion; it will be well over \$10 billion, I believe—\$13 billion.

I think when you look at that, regardless of what end of the political spectrum you come from or where you represent in Ontario, that a massive change like this does require public hearings and it does require us to look at the fine print to ensure that the interests of the people of Ontario are being best represented. That's why we're sent here to Queen's Park.

So we can talk about this omnibus legislation, this time allocation legislation, this programming motion, and we can talk about how we want to get things finished by Thursday, which is noble—I don't blame the government House leader for wanting to have an efficient timeline. Where I do fault him and his party, however, is on the substantive issues we're dealing with here that are before us in the Ontario Legislature.

In the minute I have left, I want to also say that this is a government right now that is dealing with an unprecedented level of debt. Nurses are being fired. Teachers are on strike. We have hydro bills that are the most expensive in North America. We have job losses by the day. It really behooves the government to allow us to have a full debate and public hearings on some of the most important matters for which the people of Ontario have sent us here.

So on behalf of the people of Nepean-Carleton—by the way, almost 1,000 of them joined me on Saturday in

Bells Corners for my 10th annual open house—who talked to me about the big issues that Hydro One is bringing upon them as well as hydro bills. I'm really proud to be able to represent them here today. I do really regret that we don't have more of an opportunity as Progressive Conservatives or as members of this assembly to talk about the issues that impact them in their homes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Sarnia-Lambton.

Mr. Robert Bailey: It's always a privilege and a pleasure to rise in the House and speak. I have a little bit more material, I think, than I have time. It's like having more month than you have money. Anyway, I'll go through this a little bit.

I'm privileged to rise and add comments to the debate on government motion 40, which applies to specific bills that we're going to debate here today on this time-allocated motion.

First of all, it directly affects my riding. Bill 9, An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act—many have spoken about invasive species. One of the big ones we're concerned about in my riding, because of Lake Huron and the St. Clair River and other bodies of water, are phragmites. The zebra mussels, of course, are also another issue there. Anything we can do to actually reduce that and look into some way to prevent the expansion of the phragmites and do away with that—I have some to deal with on my own property now, where I reside. I chopped them all down with some kind of a machine that got rid of them all. I've got to look at some way of treating them before fall so that they don't come back up in the spring. They're certainly a very insidious plant. Someone said that they're next to impossible to manage.

As a rural riding that borders Lake Huron and the St. Clair River, it's important that we protect water, beach and dune ecological systems from invasive species. Bill 37, An Act Respecting Invasive Species, is a good idea in principle. One wonders if it even goes far enough. I believe that committee work in my riding of Sarnia-Lambton could provide significant input that would help strengthen that bill. One member kept talking about all the committee hearings, but they're all going to be here in Queen's Park, in Toronto. The world, according to some people, might revolve around Queen's Park and Toronto, but I can assure you that the residents of my riding, plus many other ridings represented in this Legislature, would like to have input as well. Not everyone can avail themselves of the opportunity to travel here to this great city and to the Legislature to take part.

Another bill I'd like to speak about is Bill 52, the anti-SLAPP. This is a bill that has a lot of effect in my riding. A number of people there have felt encouraged, I guess I'd say, to be quiet, to shut up and not say anything about wind turbines, which is a big issue in my riding. That's something this government, in their so-called wisdom, has imposed on this province.

I have a great problem with this. The one member was speaking about how they did away with burning coal. But if they just wanted to build gas plants, that's what they

should have done. But to build these wind turbines and impose them on the people of Ontario—everybody in this chamber knows that doesn't work. For this government to continue down that track—someday, there will be an accounting on this. Hopefully, when there's a new government, there will be an inquiry, and we'll see where those—there is the old saying, "Follow the money." When someone says it's not about the money, follow the money. I hope I'm still here at that time to take part in that. I'm sure there will be some very revealing—what goes on.

We also did a lot of work on—and I said our member here from Huron—Bruce did a lot of work, as the environmental critic, on the Great Lakes Protection Act. I'll certainly support that as well—the work that she has done, as well as many other members in this Legislature.

The government has failed in the past when it has tried to dictate from Toronto, as I just said, what the best practices are for very different communities across the province. A bill as important as Bill 66 should have been travelled around the region, so that many members could have had their say.

In closing, I believe that all of these bills that have been put forward have some merit and should be discussed further. However, I cannot support the fact that this government is attempting to cut off further discussion on the bills and will not take these important issues across the province to conclude that debate.

Government motion 40 doesn't serve the interests of the people of Ontario, and I will not be supporting it. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Perth—Wellington.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: It's a pleasure to stand in my place and speak about this motion.

I actually have a definition of the motion, which I won't read today, to explain to me just exactly what this thing does. It's quite interesting, being new to the Legislature—I've only been here a little over three years—to read some of these things and find out just exactly what they meant.

But I guess I want to address my comments to the operation of the government and what they are doing here right now. They're limiting debate; they're also limiting committee time. We have seen, in the past, just exactly what this does.

I remember, back in the 2012 budget, what they did to the horse racing business in this province. Do you know, Speaker, there are only about half as many people with licences in this province as there were back in 2012? It's just incredible, what they did, and they just went ahead and did it and they cut us off. The budget bill was passed, and this happened.

I remember there was a comment made in a paper last week, I believe it was, by the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. I think I can get it right when I say I believe it said that legislators or ministers run off the rails when they don't listen to science in some of their decisions.

Certainly, we've seen this with the decision on neonics with grain, corn and soybean farmers. Yet when they say these things, they should listen to what they say, because it's perfectly true that some of the decisions being made by the government are going to have a profound effect on Ontario. Some of these bills certainly are needed, and we're going to support them.

But the problem, is we can't know everything in this Legislature; no legislator can. There are certainly a lot of people out in my riding of Perth—Wellington who would like to comment on some of these changes, especially if they affect agriculture, but they're not going to have the chance.

I was talking to some of them on the weekend who have taken an interest in what is going on down here. I said, "Well, it's not going to happen, guys. You just aren't going to have the chance, because we can only put so many people through the committee procedure."

And why is that? I said, "It's because the government is cutting off debate. They're cutting off committee time." That's hardly fair, especially if they have some good points to send to the government if the government would listen.

1550

But again, I have sat on committees in this Parliament, and any or most of the amendments that we try to put through and the third party tries to put through to the government are defeated. They don't listen, except if they make a mistake. That happened last month, I guess, when they made a mistake and voted down one of their own amendments. It's too bad that this is happening.

Again, there's quite a bit of substance to these bills that we will certainly be supporting, but it's too bad that we can't listen to some experts in the field—especially on the Great Lakes—who would probably like to speak to committee. But as we're seeing right now, committees are going to be limited in their time.

It's interesting that, since I've been here, the rural/urban divide has been discussed many times, whether it exists or whether it's something that has just been dreamed up by people. I keep hearing that more and more all the time. It can't help but expand or manifest itself in people's minds with this type of debate, this type of cut-off that's going on, that this present government is proposing.

If you are not allowed to voice your opinions in this province, in a certain period of time—certainly there are ways of doing that, but if you're cut off with such short time frames, it does leave a bad taste in people's mouths. I can understand that. That's what these types of things do, Speaker. People get a sense out there in the ridings that it doesn't matter what they think, that it's not going to be listened to, that doesn't matter what they say. We can't express their ideas at committee because we're limited to the time we can do these things. So I would hope the government, in the next Parliament, would think of this before they do these things, because it does leave a bad taste in people's mouths, and I think we really,

really have to understand that and listen to that type of thing.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Parry Sound—Muskoka.

Mr. Norm Miller: In the few minutes I have to talk to this motion, I'll follow up on what the last member was saying about the restrictive nature of this motion. It deals with a number of different bills. I note the House leader is here from the government. It looks to me like they have a mistake in this motion, actually.

One of the bills I'm concerned with is Bill 52, which is the anti-SLAPP legislation. SLAPP is strategic litigation against public participation. I know lots of people do support this bill. I'm concerned, as the northern critic and representing forestry; I know that the Ontario Forest Industry Association has great concerns to do with Bill 52. I know that the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities wants to see changes to Bill 52, to make it fairer. I know that Greenpeace supports the bill, and that makes me very nervous. So I have concerns with Bill 52. It's one of the bills that are dealt with in this motion. It's very restrictive.

It states in this motion, in terms of the committee hearings after it passes second reading, that there will be two days of public hearings and two days for clause-by-clause. It's very prescriptive. Witnesses are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis; usually that's left up to the subcommittee. Each witness has only five minutes to make a presentation. I think the bill is complicated enough that especially the expert witnesses could use a lot more than five minutes to explain their position.

This is where I think the mistake is: It allows for two days of clause-by-clause, but then it says, "Following the completion of the second hour of clause-by-clause consideration, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved." In effect what this says, if it's correct, is that after two hours of clause-by-clause it's essentially over, so I'm not quite sure why they have two days. I assume that may be a mistake. Perhaps the House leader can look into it because it's restrictive enough as it stands.

That's one of the bills. There's a number of different bills that I have an interest in, and that certainly are of interest to my riding. Bill 37, An Act respecting Invasive Species, a bill to do with invasive species, is certainly very important to Parry Sound—Muskoka. That's one that I support. I note, in getting my latest copy of the Georgian Bay Association newsletter, that they have a big section on phragmites. I've met with Colin Dobell, founder of Stop the Invasion, on this.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Phragmites?

Mr. Norm Miller: Phragmites is a plant that can grow out of control. It's an invasive species. The member for Simcoe—Grey pointed out that in Wasaga Beach Provincial Park, it was growing out of control, and the park was not allowing people to cut it down. That took some lobbying, and now that has been changed.

Asian carp: Of course, representing an area that's on Georgian Bay, I have great concerns that we keep Asian

carp out of the Great Lakes and out of Georgian Bay. So that's a bill that I think should be a positive bill and should be a needed bill.

Other bills are so much just about optics. Bill 9, the coal cessation bill: There are no coal generating plants. The bill is a one thin page, and it's all about the government trying to look like they're being green. So many of their bills are purely about optics, and so many of them make the government look green, but could actually be terrible legislation, like the Green Energy Act, as an example. Another bill—I see that I'm already down to one minute.

What we really should be talking about, and the thing most people are concerned about, is the sale of Hydro One; this fire sale of Hydro One, and this bad deal that the government is making without any consultation with people.

I just received the latest Fedeli Focus on Finance, which deals with the sale of Hydro One. Once the ongoing revenue stream from Hydro One is gone with the sale of 60% of it, what that's going to mean for the average rate consumer, or hydro user, is an increase in power bills. That's in this Fedeli Focus on Finance. I note that Tom Adams says that exactly: "It's filling the hole that" Ed Clark is "creating at OEFC that results in the rate increase that he's not talking about.... This is a shell game."

We should be spending more time talking about the sale of Hydro One. That's the issue that's on constituents' minds. No matter where we go in our ridings, people bring it up. This fire sale that the government is bringing about is a real concern to the people.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate? Further debate?

On May 27, Mr. Naqvi moved government notice of motion number 40, now government order number 24.

On May 28, Mr. Clark then moved that the motion be amended as follows:

In each section—(a), (b), (c) and (d)—that bullet number two be struck out and replaced with the following:

—“That the deadline for requests to appear be 2 p.m. on the Thursday of the week that the bill receives second reading; and

—“That following the deadline, the Clerk of the Committee provide the members of the subcommittee with a list of requests to appear; and

—“That the members of the subcommittee prioritize and return the list by 6 p.m. on the same date; and

—“That the Clerk of the Committee schedule witnesses from these prioritized lists.”

Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour of the motion will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I wish to inform the House that I have received a notice of deferment, asking that this vote be deferred until tomorrow during the time for deferred votes.

Vote deferred.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The government House leader on a point of order.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding Bill 75, An Act with respect to microbeads.

1600

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The government House leader is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to put forward a motion without notice with respect to Bill 75, An Act with respect to microbeads. Is there such unanimous consent? Agreed.

The government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs shall be authorized to meet on Thursday, June 4, 2015, between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. for the purpose of public hearings on Bill 75;

That the Clerk, in consultation with the committee Chair, be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 75:

Notice of public hearings on the Ontario parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly website and Canada NewsWire; and

That the deadline for requests to appear be 5 p.m. on Tuesday, June 2, 2015;

That, following the deadline, the Clerk of the Committee provide the members of the subcommittee with a list of requests to appear;

That the members of the subcommittee prioritize and return the list by 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, June 3, 2015;

That the Clerk of the Committee schedule witnesses from these prioritized lists; and

That each witness will receive up to five minutes for their presentation, followed by nine minutes for questions from committee members;

That the deadline for written submissions is 4 p.m. on the day of public hearings.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Mr. Naqvi has moved that the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs—

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Dispense.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Dispense? Dispense.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Orders of the day.

TRANSPORTATION STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT (MAKING ONTARIO'S ROADS SAFER), 2015 LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LE TRANSPORT (ACCROÎTRE LA SÉCURITÉ ROUTIÈRE EN ONTARIO)

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 28, 2015, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 31, An Act to amend the Highway 407 East Act, 2012 and the Highway Traffic Act in respect of various matters and to make a consequential amendment to the Provincial Offences Act / Projet de loi 31, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2012 sur l'autoroute 407 Est et le Code de la route en ce qui concerne diverses questions et apportant une modification corrélative à la Loi sur les infractions provinciales.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): When we last debated this bill, the member for Niagara Falls had the floor. I recognize the member for Niagara Falls.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Returning to this bill, I would like to briefly touch on one more thing that is going along with the theme that I've been talking about the last hour, and that is road safety in general and how it is reflected by these pieces of legislation.

It's right there in the title. According to this bill, the intent of this government is to pass Bill 31 to make Ontario roads safer. Who could disagree with something like that? If anyone here has been listening to me for the past two weeks—

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I have.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you. I appreciate that, Percy. I know the Liberals have too; they're excited to—
Interjection.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes, I know you have too, Mr. Fraser.

You know that I have said, time and time again: Safety must be our absolute, number one concern. This government should never know an inch of our roads in Ontario is unsafe for residents and not tell them. When it comes to Bill 31, we need to be using the Auditor General's report to highlight issues of road safety and learn from this. It is a great example that we can apply to this legislation when it comes to warning signs.

This government had ministry officials telling them that the companies they were awarding contracts to were not properly equipped to clear highways in this province. They were giving contracts to the lowest bidders—contractors who didn't even have enough salt or chemicals to clear our roads. We know that they saved a little bit of money, but they're now facing well over 200 lawsuits.

Think about that. How can road safety be a priority, like this bill states, when things like that are happening? Why is it that if someone is driving and using their cellphone they get a fine, but a government that gives contracts to companies that can't clear our highways gets off scot-free?

The best example for the need of oversight is in my riding of Niagara Falls. During the winter, my office inquired with the MTO about highway clearance because we felt we were seeing far too many accidents on the QEW, particularly on the stretch between Lyons Creek Road and Sodom Road. So we asked the ministry directly. Let me quote—because this is important—what was directly sent to our office regarding these concerns: “Safety is our top priority at the ministry. We looked into the areas you mentioned in your note. We have among the highest road safety standards in North America and our standards have not changed. Our contractors have strict contract requirements to follow during winter operations.”

Now, of course, this sounds good and, of course, it sounds like safety is in mind. When we’re discussing a bill called Making Ontario’s Roads Safer, then I would expect that this government has safety in mind. Well, the problem with that ministry’s response is that they had no proof that these supposedly strict standards were being met.

Looking at the Auditor General’s report, we can see that those who were given the contract to clear our roads in Niagara never even bothered to report to the ministry. Now think about that over on your side: They never even bothered to report to the ministry. There was no oversight. There was no accountability. In the end, it made things unsafe.

I’d just like to point out that without this oversight, we never would have known that the ministry was essentially not telling us the truth. So in the future, if it’s a private inspection centre or fees on the 407, we may have concerns, but finding the truth and showing the people of Ontario will be a lot more difficult. In my view, that’s a major problem. The people of this province deserve to know if their government’s plans are working or not.

Even worse than that, the ministry never even bothered to follow up with the contractor. Now think about that: The contractor never reported it; the ministry didn’t even follow up. My heart sinks when I think that for even one second one of my constituents was put at risk because this government refused to enforce proper oversight over road maintenance.

I am grateful to our first responders who were able to come out and clear the highways when accidents occurred. Think about this though: Because these contractors didn’t have the proper equipment and were doing a poor job, the first responders in my riding were put at risk. I know a lot of people are talking today, but I want to repeat that: Those contractors didn’t have the proper equipment and were doing a poor job, and first responders in my riding were put at risk. That should never happen. Their safety should be a major concern, and I am furious to think that their lives were put at risk so this province could save a few bucks.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, my riding has a number of distinct communities, each with its own incredible and unique culture and history. It’s one of the oldest parts of

the province. It makes sense that this history has created these communities. So what happens is, you end up with a few roads that connect each of these communities. People live all over our region and work all over our region, oftentimes not in the town or the city that they live in. They’re using our highways constantly—it’s the only way to get around in my riding. So when we’re talking about not properly clearing highways, it’s not just a minor inconvenience; it’s how people in my riding live. This province seems to continue delaying their GO trains, so it looks like they may have to drive on the highways a little while longer.

1610

It’s for those reasons that I’m so focused on safety. There’s absolutely no reason that safety should ever be compromised. It’s why my party is so passionate about this bill and why I’m so furious about the Auditor General’s report. On one hand, we’ve been told this government is planning to make Ontario roads safer, but this is the same government that oversaw the winter maintenance plan that, frankly, failed the people of this province.

The Auditor General’s report can tell us a lot about Bill 31. It proves the failures of unregulated privatization that lacks accountability. This is a government that ran on accountability, yet they gave money to the lowest bidder to clear our highways in my region, and they never asked them to prove they’re actually doing it. Does that sound like accountability, Mr. Speaker? Is that the kind of accountability that this government ran on? The people of Ontario deserve to know how their tax dollars are being used, even if they’re being used properly. In this case, people were paying taxes and there were no reports to the minister, even as they were complaining about road conditions.

I’ll close by saying this: When you did an RFP to out-contractors to do road safety, how do you award a contract to companies that don’t even have the equipment to clean our roads?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments? Questions and comments?

Further debate? Further debate? Further debate?

Ms. Sandals has moved third reading of Bill 31, An Act to amend the Highway 407 East Act, 2012 and the Highway Traffic Act in respect of various matters and to make a consequential amendment to the Provincial Offences Act. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes would have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

I wish to inform the House that I have received a deferral notice from the chief government whip asking that the vote be deferred until tomorrow during the time of deferred votes.

Third reading vote deferred.

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Point of order, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): A point of order: The government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe that you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice respecting tonight's sitting.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice with respect to tonight's sitting. Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I move that, notwithstanding the order passed earlier today, when the House adjourns this afternoon, it shall stand adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The government House leader has moved that, notwithstanding the

order passed earlier today, when the House adjourns this afternoon, it shall stand adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Orders of the day.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1615.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiques, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengary	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Oraziotti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Vacant
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo
Han Dong, Michael Harris
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala
Monique Taylor
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson
Mike Colle, Grant Crack
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przedziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Fraser
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins
Jim McDonell, Randy Pettapiece
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przedziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qadri
Todd Smith
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Han Dong, John Fraser
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile
Bill Walker
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott
Han Dong, Sylvia Jones
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

Continued from back cover

Gala de l'Express Étudiant	
Ms. Marie-France Lalonde	4786

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES / RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs	
Ms. Soo Wong	4787
Report adopted	4787

MOTIONS

House sittings	
Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4787
Motion agreed to	4788
Committee membership	
Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4788
Motion agreed to	4788

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Curriculum	
Mr. Monte McNaughton	4788
Privatization of public assets	
Miss Monique Taylor	4788
Environmental protection	
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry	4788
Agri-food industry	
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson	4789
Hospital funding	
Ms. Cindy Forster	4789
Water fluoridation	
Mr. Bob Delaney	4789
Hospital services	
Mr. Norm Miller	4789

Privatization of public assets	
Ms. Peggy Sattler	4790
Municipal restructuring	
Ms. Eleanor McMahon	4790
Hydro rates	
Mr. Randy Pettapiece	4791

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Order of business	
Mr. Gilles Bisson	4791
Hon. James J. Bradley	4795
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur	4797
Hon. Bill Mauro	4797
Mrs. Gila Martow	4798
Mr. Bill Walker	4800
Mme France Gélinas	4802
Miss Monique Taylor	4804
Mr. Arthur Potts	4804
Ms. Soo Wong	4806
Hon. Jeff Leal	4806
Ms. Lisa MacLeod	4807
Mr. Robert Bailey	4808
Mr. Randy Pettapiece	4809
Mr. Norm Miller	4810
Vote deferred	4811
Order of business	
Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4811
Motion agreed to	4811
Transportation Statute Law Amendment Act (Making Ontario's Roads Safer), 2015, Bill 31, Mr. Del Duca / Loi de 2015 modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne le transport (accroître la sécurité routière en Ontario), projet de loi 31, M. Del Duca	
Mr. Wayne Gates	4811
Third reading vote deferred	4812
House sittings	
Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4813
Motion agreed to	4813

CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Monday 1 June 2015 / Lundi 1^{er} juin 2015

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Randy Pettapiece	4771
Hon. Ted McMeekin	4771
Ms. Sylvia Jones	4771
Mr. Peter Tabuns	4771
Hon. Helena Jaczek	4771
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson	4771
Mr. Bob Delaney	4771
Hon. Steven Del Duca	4771
Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde	4771
Ms. Cheri DiNovo	4771
Mr. Arthur Potts	4771
Mr. Yvan Baker	4771
Hon. Steven Del Duca	4771
Ms. Sophie Kiwala	4771
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn	4771
Wearing of hockey jersey	
Ms. Jennifer K. French	4771
Contempt of Parliament	
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac)	4772

ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

Privatization of public assets	
Mr. Jim Wilson	4773
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4774
Privatization of public assets	
Mr. John Yakabuski	4774
Hon. Bob Chiarelli	4775
Privatization of public assets	
Ms. Andrea Horwath	4775
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4775
Privatization of public assets	
Ms. Andrea Horwath	4776
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4776
Privatization of public assets	
Ms. Lisa MacLeod	4777
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4777
Hon. Charles Sousa	4778
Privatization of public assets	
Mr. Peter Tabuns	4778
Hon. Bob Chiarelli	4778
Services for the disabled	
Mr. Chris Ballard	4779
Hon. Helena Jaczek	4779

Privatization of public assets

Mr. Victor Fedeli	4779
Hon. Bob Chiarelli	4780
Hon. Charles Sousa	4780

Class size

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky	4780
Hon. Liz Sandals	4780

Transportation infrastructure

Ms. Ann Hoggarth	4781
Hon. Steven Del Duca	4781

Privatization of public assets

Mr. Randy Hillier	4781
Hon. Charles Sousa	4782

Air-rail link

Ms. Andrea Horwath	4782
Hon. Steven Del Duca	4782

Labour dispute

Mrs. Laura Albanese	4783
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn	4783

Teachers' labour disputes

Mr. Garfield Dunlop	4784
Hon. Liz Sandals	4784

Visitors

Mr. Bill Walker	4784
Mr. Percy Hatfield	4784

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

Tourism

Ms. Laurie Scott	4784
------------------------	------

Jimmy Velgakis

Ms. Cheri DiNovo	4784
------------------------	------

Spring Bird Festival

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn	4785
----------------------------	------

Aggregate extraction

Mr. Ted Arnott	4785
----------------------	------

Injured workers

Ms. Cindy Forster	4785
-------------------------	------

Kayla Baker

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry	4785
----------------------------	------

Business improvement

Mr. Randy Pettapiece	4786
----------------------------	------

Carassauga

Mr. Bob Delaney	4786
-----------------------	------

Continued on inside back cover

CALON
X1
- D23

Govern
Publia



No. 91

N° 91

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

First Session, 41st Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Première session, 41^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Tuesday 2 June 2015

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mardi 2 juin 2015



Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière
Deborah Deller

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 2 June 2015

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 2 juin 2015

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SMART GROWTH FOR OUR COMMUNITIES ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 POUR UNE CROISSANCE INTELLIGENTE DE NOS COLLECTIVITÉS

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 21, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 73, An Act to amend the Development Charges Act, 1997 and the Planning Act / Projet de loi 73, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur les redevances d'aménagement et la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): When we last discussed this item, the member from Oxford had time left. The member for Oxford.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to rise today to speak to Bill 73, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act.

The last time I spoke to this bill, in April, I explained why this debate was premature. I explained that the government had only just launched the land use planning review of the greenbelt, the Niagara Escarpment, the Oak Ridges moraine and the growth plan. The result of that review will impact the Planning Act. But instead of waiting to hear the results, the minister has already introduced legislation that would make changes to the act. That's not a sign of a government that's listening.

We've heard that about 3,000 people took time to come out to those review meetings to share their thoughts and concerns. We know that numerous organizations took time to analyze what is working and where there are challenges that could be fixed. They are taking time to put together comprehensive, well-thought-out proposals for changes to make the three plans more consistent, to protect our natural heritage and to ensure the long-term viability of agriculture in the protected areas. But instead of waiting to hear from all those people and organizations, the government introduced legislation to make changes to the Planning Act. I'm disappointed that the government is making partial changes without taking the time to get it right and without waiting for the results of the review to develop a comprehensive plan.

This bill also makes changes to the Ontario Municipal Board process. As you may know, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Attorney General were tasked in their mandate letters with a review of the Ontario Municipal Board. That review hasn't even started, but the minister has introduced legislation to amend appeals to the Ontario Municipal Board.

I think we all agree that the system could work better, but we need a proper review to ensure that we make the right changes. Neither of those reviews has been completed since the last time this bill was debated, but there are a number of other things that have happened.

Our party elected a new leader, Patrick Brown, and we are pleased to have someone who is so hard-working and committed to listening to Ontarians, contrary to what this government is doing. Since the last time we debated this bill, the government introduced their budget and increased spending by another \$2.4 billion, and the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association released the results of their annual surveys, which show that the waiting list for affordable housing has reached a record high. There are now over 168,000 families waiting for affordable housing in Ontario. That's what has happened since the last time this bill came forward for debate.

Here's what hasn't happened: The comment period for this bill on the EBR Environmental Registry hasn't finished; numerous stakeholders haven't finished their analysis of the impact of this bill; we haven't had the results of the land use review or the launch of the Ontario Municipal Board review; and the government hasn't taken any action to move forward my bill, the Housing Services Corporation Accountability Act, to stop the misuse of social housing dollars. I hope that before the next time we debate this bill, all of these things will have happened.

Mr. Speaker, as I said during the first part of my lead-off speech, municipal planning and the Planning Act are a matter of balance. It's about ensuring that individual communities and businesses have input into the future of their communities. It's about addressing concerns while ensuring that the good projects can move forward. It's about ensuring that families can have a home and new businesses can be built and create jobs, while controlling sprawl, protecting our environment and preserving agricultural land.

In fact, a few months ago before the land use planning review for the greenbelt, Oak Ridges moraine, Niagara Escarpment and the growth plan began, I wrote to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and laid out a number of things we wanted to see in that review. We wanted to ensure that there were full public consultations,

that for every piece of property being added to the greenbelt, the owner had an opportunity to comment and provide their input. Unfortunately, when the greenbelt was established, many people did not find out that their property was included until after the boundaries were announced. We asked that the review look not just at the amount of agricultural land in the greenbelt, but at the viability of the farms and the challenges that the farmers are facing. The best way to protect farmland in the greenbelt is to ensure that the farmers are able to earn a living farming it.

We asked that there be a proper appeals process to evaluate where mistakes were made. For instance, when the original boundaries were drawn in one town, there was environmentally sensitive land that was excluded, but serviced land surrounded by development was put into the greenbelt. There was another case where property was included in the greenbelt because planners thought there was a river located on it, only to find out later that the river was on a neighbouring property. In another case, there was a settlement area established around a village located in the escarpment which the community says is too environmentally sensitive to develop. They believe that it should be included in the greenbelt and no development should be allowed, but as it stands, there is no ability for them to appeal the designation.

In fact, one of the sections of this bill impacts both the greenbelt and the Oak Ridges moraine because it removes the right to appeal these boundaries in an official plan. It also removes the right for properties included in source water protection areas and properties restricted under the Lake Simcoe Protection Act or the growth plan.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize that the official plan is not the most effective way to appeal, but currently people don't feel that they have an opportunity to appeal at all. As I said during my previous speech on this bill, the problem is that right now there isn't a real appeal mechanism for these land use designations, so it appears that some property owners, in frustration, are appealing the designation in the official plan to the Ontario Municipal Board. That puts municipalities in a difficult position, being forced to defend provincial decisions that they didn't make. As well, the Ontario Municipal Board is restricted in their decision because they must conform with or have regard to the provincial policy. We need a solution to this problem, but simply removing the appeal of the land designation in the official plan won't resolve it. What we need is an appeal process that will deal with problems when an error has been found.

Originally this morning we were scheduled to be debating a government programming motion that would limit the debate on committee hearings for four government bills: An Act respecting Invasive Species, An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act to require the cessation of coal use to generate electricity at generation facilities, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin and An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the

Statutory Powers Procedure Act in order to protect expression on matters of public interest. Despite the fact that these bills have had limited debate, the government tabled a motion to time-allocate them and ram them through this Legislature. Despite the fact they still won't be passed until the fall, the government is restricting public input by limiting the committee hearings and holding them all right here in Toronto.

0910

Now, the government wants us to believe that their changes to the rules and community consultation in this bill will increase the opportunities for the public to participate. Unfortunately, the opposite is true. While we support giving municipalities the freedom to design consultations that work in their area, we believe there should be a minimum standard to ensure that the public gets an opportunity to participate.

This bill exempts municipalities from subsection (19.2), which states, "Every person who attends a public meeting required under clause (15)(d) shall be given an opportunity to make representations in respect of the current proposed plan." This will no longer apply. Removing the requirement for this section weakens the public ability to participate in the planning of their own communities.

As I mentioned previously, I also have concerns about the way the government is proposing to create planning committees through this bill. It's another case where they may have good intentions but will actually reduce public participation. The proposal is to create a new planning advisory committee that would have at least one member who is not a municipal employee or a councillor. The flaw with this proposal is that many municipalities, such as those in Oxford, currently have planning discussions and make planning decisions at open council meetings, which are regularly attended by the media and members of the public. Concerned citizens have the ability to see the agendas, attend the meetings and make presentations. The local media is there to report on those decisions.

This bill would move those discussions from the council chamber to the back room, where there is less public participation and less media scrutiny. Since the majority of the committee would still be members of council, they likely won't feel the need to repeat the entire debate and discussion when the issue comes back to council for approval. The public will miss out on that discussion and that debate.

When I spoke to this legislation in April, I pointed out that it added a number of new reporting requirements. In fact, a presentation to the Ontario Small Urban Municipalities described these additional burdens as "traps" in the bill for municipalities. In their analysis of the bill, one municipality said, of the expanded requirements for the treasurer's statement, "While this is typically covered through the budget worksheets or separate summary report, the proposed legislation now states that reporting by project is required. These requirements to report on a project basis will be yet another report to senior levels of government that has the potential to consume a lot of time and resources."

They said that if the changes are adopted, as proposed, it would require them to update or change many of their current practices. They went on to say, "Specifically the proposed financial reporting requirements will involve additional new detailed reporting that will consume time and resources and provide little value-added services at the local level."

Another municipality said that "changes proposed to both the Planning Act and Development Charges Act, particularly in the areas of increased reporting requirements, may strain staff resources."

We support better planning and transparency, as do municipalities and organizations like the home builders' association. I think that the move to increase reporting on the use of section 37 funds is positive, but at the same time, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing needs to be aware of the overall reporting burdens to municipalities.

When I first spoke to this bill six weeks ago, I challenged the minister to review the paperwork and reporting requirements for our municipalities. I asked him to find an unnecessary report or form to eliminate for each new report the government requires, such as those in this bill. Six weeks later, there has been no sign of progress on that challenge. Since the government programming motion is forcing legislation through without summer committee hearings, perhaps the minister can use part of his summer break to address the challenges and address the red tape and reporting burden faced by our municipalities.

Mr. Speaker, one of the issues we are struggling with in Ontario is affordable housing. As I said earlier, the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association has recently released their annual survey, which found that there are now 168,000 families on the waiting list for affordable housing in Ontario. I have put forward a private member's bill, the Housing Services Corporation Accountability Act, which would stop some of the misuse of money intended for social housing. I again asked the government to work with me and move that bill forward in committee so we could ensure that all the public dollars intended to provide housing go to help those 168,000 families.

But the waiting list for housing is not the only sign that we're having an affordability problem in Ontario. Affordability is an issue we hear about from seniors on fixed incomes who want to move into a more accessible home. Affordability is also an issue we hear about from young families who are forced to commute long distances each day in order to live in a location they can afford.

The Royal Bank of Canada's report *Housing Trends and Affordability*, released in March, states, "Solid home price increases in Ontario were" a main factor contributing "to the slight erosion of housing affordability across Canada in" the fourth quarter of 2014.

Craig Wright, senior vice-president and chief economist for RBC, said, "We are watching Toronto pretty closely as it's a market that time and time again shows

deteriorating affordability—indicating that owning a home in the area, especially a single detached, is a stretch for many local homebuyers."

This is another example why the land use planning review should have been completed before this legislation was introduced. Part of Places to Grow is an effort to encourage municipalities to intensify. We have also heard from a number of experts about the need to encourage more intensification around transit. But this bill does nothing to support those goals.

A recent study by Pembina found that "because there is a lack of affordable location-efficient homes, homebuyers often are forced to move into car-dependent suburbs."

While American cities such as Washington, Seattle, New York and Denver are looking to policies to create more affordable housing around transit, this government is proposing policies that will have the opposite effect. This bill will increase development charges and make housing in Ontario less affordable. Development charges are the fees that builders pay to municipalities to fund infrastructure such as sewers, water and roads. They are needed for many municipalities to afford the infrastructure necessary for these new homes. But at the same time, we need to recognize the impact on the cost of housing.

As the member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore said when he was chair of Toronto's planning and growth committee, "What many people assume is the developers pay. Well, the reality is purchasers pay."

Development charges become part of the cost of a home and are passed on to people purchasing new homes or condos, or renting an apartment, and that cost is significant. In 2009, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. found that government-imposed charges, including development charges, represented up to 19% of the median price of a single-family new home. The Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association reported that for a \$440,000 family home, over \$25,000 goes to development charges.

The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario commissioned a report called *Alternatives to Development Charges for Growth-Related Capital Costs*. It found that development charges are now \$30,000 to \$50,000 per single-family home in high-growth municipalities surrounding Toronto. By comparison, it found that development fees in Calgary and Edmonton are less than \$8,000 per unit.

This bill would increase development charges and therefore the cost of housing in a number of ways. First, it would remove the 10% discount on transit costs. It would allow development charges to be charged on planned future services instead of historical services. It would remove the list of items that are exempted from development charges from the act and allow the government to choose which to exempt. That means that new homeowners and businesses could now be paying development charges to pay for cultural or entertainment facilities, including museums, theatres and art galleries, or to fund a new city hall or a tourism facility such as a convention centre.

One of the items that was previously exempt was the provision of waste management services. The government has already indicated that under the new regulations, municipalities will now be allowed to have development charges cover the cost of that. In fact, there have already been municipal requests to expand it further and allow development charges on all of the previously exempt items, including cultural, tourism and entertainment facilities.

I understand why municipalities want the additional development charges. Many of them are struggling to make ends meet and provide the infrastructure and services their residents want. Part of the problem is a provincial government that is more focused on blaming others than taking responsibility for the challenges that municipalities face. This year, spending in the provincial budget increased by \$2.4 billion, but the Ontario municipal partnership grants that municipalities depend on were being cut again.

Whenever questions are raised, the government tries to duck the issue by blaming previous governments, but after 12 years in office and huge increases in spending, the truth is this government could have changed funding to municipalities if they had wanted to. They could have changed responsibilities and programs. The system and challenges that exist today are the responsibility of this government and no one else.

0920

It's this government that in the budget proposed municipalities sell some of their assets to help pay for transit. It's this government that is proposing to increase development charges and pass the cost on to new homeowners and businesses instead of helping municipalities find ways to make ends meet. And it's this government that may propose further increases through their working group established to look at "more complex land use planning and development charges issues, and propose solutions." Again, I have the concern that these are issues that the government should have researched and consulted on before introducing this legislation. And again, these are items that are just going to force the cost of housing to go up.

We cannot have a full conversation about the affordability of housing in Ontario without talking about the spiralling cost of hydro. The Ontario government is now proposing to sell off the majority of Hydro One. Once that asset is sold and the money is spent, it's gone; 30, 40 or 50 years from now that transit will need to be refurbished and updated. The people will still only have 40% of Ontario Hydro and, based on this government's plan, will still be stuck with the debt that's presently there. That's like selling part of the house to pay for the monthly gas bill—or, in Ontario, more likely selling it to pay the hydro bill.

Which raises the second problem with this proposal: The Premier already admitted that she can't guarantee that the price of hydro won't go up. Spiralling hydro costs are already a significant problem in Ontario for homeowners and businesses. Those increases, along with

things like the increasing development fees proposed in this bill, are already convincing businesses to choose other jurisdictions and are already making homes unaffordable.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other concerns that was raised about this legislation was the changes to the rules around parkland. As you know, new developments are required to contribute a percentage of their land for parkland, or they can provide cash in lieu. If municipalities choose to take the money instead of the land, this bill would change the amount that they're entitled to, from a rate equivalent to the value of one hectare for 300 dwelling units to a rate of one hectare for 500 units proposed. The rate for actual land given would remain at one hectare for 300 units. While the goal may be to encourage more donations of land for parks by increasing the value that the municipality receives, the reality is that already many municipalities take the land and sell it at a later date. This would just encourage more municipalities to do the same. The land they get may not be in the right place for a park, they may have already have enough parks or they may just decide that they need the money more.

In one of my communities, we ended up with a park the size of one lot in a subdivision right across the street from a large playground and ball field. The county had to maintain the lot, but it wasn't used or needed because everyone went to the great park across the street. Eventually the county sold it and ended up with the money anyway.

While the goal of this change is good, the result is that we're going to put municipalities in a position where they are going into the real estate business. Rather than simply getting the payment from the developer, municipalities will spend time dealing with real estate agents. This isn't the best use of their time and it isn't where they have the experience. As we have discovered too often when governments start taking on the functions of the private sector, it often results in inefficiencies and costs the taxpayers.

There are also a number of concerns about the freezes on appeals proposed by this bill. It's another example of unintended consequences. This bill introduces a freeze on appeals following the adoption of a new official plan. This means that no rezoning would be allowed unless it is initiated by the municipality. I understand why the government would want to include this section, but I think we need to be cautious of the unintended effect of this change.

It will result in a small window during which businesses can actually appeal to make zoning changes. The reality is that the approval process of an official plan can take a long time. In fact, I recently received a resolution from the town of Halton Hills that raised concerns about the fact that it took four years to complete their official plan conformity amendments. Then there will be a two-year freeze on top of that. Once the applicant can initiate an appeal, it can take two years to get it completed. That means that a business applying for a change to the official plan to be allowed to build and create jobs can wait years for the ability to do so.

Minister, while it isn't an official plan freeze, I think we all know from our experience in municipal government that no one wants to make changes to the official plan in the year or two before it comes up for review. Again, that leaves a small window for change.

Both municipalities and home builders raised concern about the proposed two-year moratorium on minor variance applications following an owner-initiated zoning bylaw. Home builders are concerned that this would leave property owners unable to make even minor adjustments and would actually result in more delays and appeals. One municipality said, "This proposed amendment is overly restrictive and limits the ability of local communities to deal with unique site-specific circumstances that may occur from time to time."

I appreciated the opportunity to raise the concerns about Bill 73. I know I'm starting to get short on time, but before I finish I want to talk a little bit about the importance of debating this bill. I think it's important to recognize the difference between regions in our province, the differences in municipalities and the difference in how land use planning will impact communities, people and organizations within it.

This bill attempts to achieve a balance, and it's important that all members have the opportunity to talk about whether the government has achieved that balance for them and for their communities. I think we need to hear from the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook about the impact on tender fruit lands in his communities and the need for growth in order to have enough population to get the services they want. I think we need to hear from the member from Dufferin—Caledon about whether the bill achieves balance between growth at the south end of her riding and the protection of the escarpment. We need to hear from the member from Timiskaming—Cochrane about how this bill would impact northern Ontario.

A couple of months ago, when I met the mayor of Kenora, I pointed out his office is closer to Calgary than it is to Toronto. We can't assume that the policies that work in Toronto or Ottawa or even Oxford will work for them. The only way for us to be assured that their community will be well served by this bill is for their member to speak to it and, if it passes second reading, for us to have full committee hearings so we can hear from NOMA, from FONOM, from ROMA and from AMO; so we can hear from the Ontario Home Builders' Association and the Ontario Road Builders' Association; so we can hear from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture; so we can hear directly from the mayors and councillors who will be impacted by this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I thank the member from Oxford. I just wanted to let you know that I was allowing you to finish your last run-on sentence. So I appreciate that.

Questions and comments?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I enjoyed the speech from the member. I think it's important that he pointed out the fact that, particularly with this type of bill, it's very important for us to get the input of the municipalities that are impacted by it.

Far too often in House, committee hearings are being limited to Toronto when the reality is that folks who are being impacted by bills have completely different realities in different parts of this province. The fact that committees are limited to Toronto really limits the voice of those municipalities that are going to be affected by many of the changes. I think it's absolutely important that we have committees that travel to different parts of the province to allow their voices to be heard.

I think it's also important, as the member stated, to ensure that various members of this House are given an opportunity to share their concerns. As with committees, members who come from different parts of this province have completely different realities, and we need to find the commonalities and find ways that we can build a bill that would actually address the concerns of the various and varied needs in this province. Like the member mentioned, there are areas in our province which are closer to Calgary than they are to Toronto, so for us to assume that Toronto would have the voice to speak to their needs is somewhat a mistaken notion.

I think, again, it's very important, as the member stated, that we make sure this bill is addressed by as many voices as possible and is given as broad a base in terms of outreach and response so that we can address those varied needs.

I grew up in Windsor. The realities of my town of Windsor were different from the experiences that I experienced in London or in Toronto, and I think it's important for us to address that reality. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker; it was my pleasure.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: It gives me great pleasure to say a few words about the comments from the member from Oxford.

0930

I think at the outset the member said, "What's the rush?" I hear over and over again that we've been in government for 12 or 13 years and we're not getting things done, so I was hoping their new leader would set them straight a little bit.

He talked about lack of consultation. The member should know that the minister has been consulting since last fall, before the legislation came out, to get the input, and we'll be consulting some more.

He talked about how there's nothing in the bill about OMB. He also should know that there's a separate process to deal with the OMB, because it is very cumbersome. So it's something we need to do.

He says that this will create onerous reporting requirements for municipalities. Frankly, the reporting, for the vast—the majority of municipalities are doing that already, and we'll be there to help other municipalities achieve those goals.

He talked, once again, about lack of consultation. Municipalities have to form what we're calling a community planning permit system where it will allow ratepayers to get involved from the outset. On planning

issues and review of the official plan, there will be local input.

We're also talking about the fact that we know how onerous it is for municipalities—I was there for 12 years—to review official plans. By the time you were done, it was time to start again. We're proposing to extend that from five to 10 years. We're making the plans a little bit more flexible so that the development charges can be extended to things like transit and waste diversion.

I think we need to move on on this piece of legislation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I'm pleased to stand in support of my colleague from Oxford today. We need to recognize in this House that he carries this file with tremendous expertise and commitment as a past mayor and past warden within Oxford county. With that, he absolutely gets it in terms of the importance of involving municipalities.

For goodness' sake, we saw the demise and the frustration and the absolute lack of respect that has evolved since the Liberals enacted the Green Energy Act in 2009. We can't go down that path again.

We do get worried when we contemplate Bill 66. It's another Liberal bill that has the potential of ripping yet more autonomy away from our local municipalities. We're going to be talking about that in more detail. We have some very specific asks because, quite frankly, when the member from Oxford touched on Hydro One, and a couple of weeks ago we had a rally on the front lawn under the spirit of the tagline "Enough is enough"—quite frankly, when it comes to the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, we're saying back to the government, "Enough is enough." Let municipalities do what they're meant to do and, for goodness' sake, take into consideration, as the member suggested, the regional differences across this wonderful province of ours.

I say that sincerely, because at the ROMA convention this past winter, we heard the Premier, in her address, reference the fact that we should be applying a lens on all policies. Quite frankly, that's one of our asks with respect specifically to Bill 66. We need to lay down a lens that NOMA and ROMA work together on—it's called the rural lens—to just see exactly how policies suggested by this government can work conversely and handcuff our municipalities. Quite frankly, they are the closest to the taxpayer; they are the ones that should be dexterous and left open to deal with the issues as they see fit at the local level.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments? The member from Windsor-Tecumseh. No, not Windsor-Tecumseh?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Further debate?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): No. Questions and comments.

I now recognize the member from London-Fanshawe.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Thank you very much, Speaker. The member from Windsor-Tecumseh is ahead of himself. He's actually a visionary in a lot of ways. I'm

really looking forward to his debate on this Bill 72, An Act to authorize the expenditure of certain amounts for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2015. That's what it's called. But really the catchy title for this bill is the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act. And there's no other way to say it: We need to have smart growth in our communities, in our cities, in our province.

One example that I'd like to highlight is that just last week the government cut some funding to MTCU, which affected some growth in the city of London. So what has happened is, they've cut this program for small business entrepreneurship to start up and help the economy—a driver to help small businesses start up. There was an article in the paper, and I got some calls in my office about how this is not going to help London grow, because we know that a lot of the heart and soul of our economy, in our city and our communities, are small businesses. They create local jobs. There are lots of spinoffs in the community with regard to small business growth. We've seen exponential growth in small business entrepreneurship in London.

Our Western Fair Farmers' Market: There are a lot of new initiatives that have been created through small entrepreneurship in London. Smart growth also extends to those small businesses that actually want to thrive and make Ontario a better place to be and to create jobs. That's something that growth is about. It's about creating jobs. If we don't have that creation of jobs, unfortunately a lot of our cities aren't able to grow in the ways they're intended.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Now back to the member from Oxford for final comments.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the members from Bramalea-Gore-Malton, Northumberland-Quinte West, Huron-Bruce and London-Fanshawe for their kind comments. I just wanted to touch on a couple of the questions and comments, and I'd like to make some comments on what the parliamentary assistant for Northumberland pointed out, all the consultations that have taken place in getting here because the minister has been talking about reviewing the Planning Act.

I just want to point out that my first involvement with reviewing the Planning Act was when the NDP were in this room and the bill was Bill 163, and I was the municipal representative on the provincial committee to talk about planning in Ontario. That was the first comprehensive Planning Act that the province had. It takes a long time and a lot of consultation to get what you need. It has been changed a number of times.

I just want to point out that the minister announced the review of the growth plan, the escarpment, the Oak Ridges moraine and the greenbelt, and all of those reviews are part of the Planning Act and Places to Grow. It all goes back to the Planning Act.

Yesterday, I met with the representative from the greenbelt. They said that one of the things they needed in all the legislation—they didn't, I guess, realize that we were going to be debating this bill today—is that we

needed to bring a uniformity about them so that definitions in the bills were all the same. I would think that the minister would want to wait, in passing a bill like this, until that review was completed.

Mr. Todd Smith: That makes sense.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: It just doesn't make any other sense to me that that's what they would want to do; that they would want to make it work for the benefit of everyone.

In London-Fanshawe's comments about helping people through the process so they could move forward with their business, I just want to point out that the OMB process needs to be defined. People should be able to get something done in a matter of weeks, not a matter of years. This change is not here, and yet we're dealing with reviewing the OMB. I think we need to review it more and wait with this one until we have all the facts.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Once again, I am honoured and privileged to have the opportunity to stand here in the Ontario Legislature as just one of 107 voices bringing the views of my constituents in Windsor-Tecumseh to, in this case, the debate on Bill 73, An Act to amend the Development Charges Act, 1997 and the Planning Act. I might surprise some people because I'll be saying some nice things about this bill, and of course I'll be saying some not-so-nice things about the proposed legislation. No surprises there; that's why they call us critics. Being the critic for municipal affairs and housing, I'm expected to oppose some things put up by the minister. On the other hand, if he's doing something I like, I'll be the first to tell him so.

0940

I do have a bit of experience in municipal affairs. I served seven years on city council in Windsor. During that time, I was also elected to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' national board. I served three terms there. I was also elected three times to the provincial association, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. I'm a former chair of the large urban caucus and a former AMO vice-president. So that's why I was delighted when my leader, Andrea Horwath, appointed me our party critic for municipal affairs and housing. But, Speaker, enough about me.

Many of us were hoping this proposed bill would go further than it has. For example, we were hoping for real changes to the process that allows the Ontario Municipal Board to override the express wishes of Ontario municipalities.

We were hoping for the government to show leadership on what is known as inclusionary zoning.

We were hoping affordable housing would be a higher priority for a government that likes to tout itself as progressive and governing from the activist centre.

We are disappointed in the government yet again.

You know, you can fool some of the people some of the time—and this bill makes that attempt—but you can't fool the people who were counting on more in this bill to

help them find safe and affordable housing through inclusionary zoning.

Let's talk about affordable housing just for a few minutes, and let's start here in the Toronto area, where so many of the Liberal members come from. Toronto Community Housing has 58,000 units. Some 164,000 people live in these 58,000 apartments and homes. By comparison, let's look at it this way: 164,000 people are living in the city of Toronto's subsidized housing units and the entire population of Prince Edward Island is 145,000. Basically, if you do the math, that's 20,000 more people living in subsidized housing provided by the city of Toronto than live on Prince Edward Island. That's staggering, but consider this: There are 165,000 families on the waiting list to get into subsidized housing in Toronto.

The city of Toronto is just one provider of social housing in the GTA. There are more than 240 community-based co-ops and non-profit organizations also providing social housing in Toronto.

The city's social housing unit supervises more than 93,000 subsidized units, including more than 2,600 rent supplements with private landlords. When you include those numbers, we have more than 78,000 households currently on the active waiting list for social housing in Toronto. That's just Toronto, let alone the rest of the province.

Many of these people are currently housed in overpriced, sometimes illegal and unregulated apartments. To finalize my point on the need for the government to do more for those most in need of housing, the waiting list I just mentioned—families on that list have to wait anywhere from two years to nine years, depending on the number of people in the family and the location of the units that become available. You'll wait an average of more than six and a half years in the city of Toronto. It's worse in the region of Peel, where the average wait time is almost eight and a half years.

I don't envy the people who run Toronto's community housing program, but I do thank them for their service to those most in need in this part of the province. They face tremendous challenges every day and they are one—and just one—of the 1,400 social housing providers across our great province.

Late last month, there was a newspaper story in the Toronto Sun, Speaker. Maybe you'll recall the headline: "Tory Gets the Hammer Out." Toronto mayor John Tory is seeking more than one and a half billion dollars from the provincial and federal governments to fix the city's crumbling housing stock. The mayor and former leader of the Ontario Conservative Party spoke of the moral obligation that the Liberal government in Ontario and the Conservative government in Ottawa have so that housing units can be maintained. Only 64% of Toronto's subsidized housing units are in good or fair condition, while 35% are rated in poor shape and 1% are said to be in critical condition.

The city paid close to \$200,000 for an outside study to evaluate their housing units. The outside experts say that unless money is spent on repairs over the next eight

years, more than 90% of the units will be in poor or critical shape. That should scare everyone in this chamber, because if you think we have a housing crisis now in Toronto, wait and see what happens, unless the three orders of government can get together and fix the assets now before they rot away.

Think about this for a moment. Let me highlight it for the Liberals representing Toronto-area ridings: Unless you help find the money to help out—we're talking about the Toronto Community Housing stock—4,000 homes will be in critical need of repair within four years; 12,000 homes and apartments will be in critical condition by 2023; and 7,500 homes and apartments will be uninhabitable if repairs aren't made over the next eight years.

In my area of Windsor and Essex county, we face similar challenges with our stock of subsidized housing, and it's no different anywhere else in Ontario, just on a smaller scale.

I know the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is interested in affordable housing. He's engaged in a review of the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy, which was launched in mid-April. I know others have questioned why that study wasn't done earlier so the results could have been included in this bill, but that will be a discussion for another day, I'm sure.

When the minister introduced this bill, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, which amends the Development Charges Act and the Planning Act, he talked a lot about putting the pieces of a puzzle together. He said, "The last piece of our puzzle, and perhaps the most important piece, involves the discussion around affordable housing." To continue the minister's quotation, he said, "I've always believed that a truly complete land use planning picture—the whole puzzle—must indeed include affordable housing."

I fully agree, and I agree with the minister when he concluded that portion of his opening statement with, "We all need to understand that planning and housing are linked, and that we can't complete this puzzle without making sure we have a healthy supply of affordable housing in Ontario."

Those must be comforting words to John Tory, the mayor of Toronto, who has been asking the province, like I say, to step up to the plate with \$864 million to pay a third of the costs of repairing the crumbling housing stock at Toronto Community Housing.

So that begs the question, why bring in this act at this time when the minister has barely launched his public consultation with an endgame of updating the government's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy? I trust the minister will understand why some of us question the timing of these events.

It is unfortunate, but municipalities have grave concerns about the way this government conducts its business. For example, heading into last summer's election, municipal leaders thought they had a deal with the government. One of AMO's top priorities—and it has been a top priority for several years—was getting control over the rising costs of municipal insurance. The way to

do that was pretty simple: Municipal leaders told the government of the great need to reform joint and several liability costs. Lawyers see municipalities as having deep pockets, so thousands of cases are launched against villages, towns, cities, counties and regions, which may only have a small, indirect connection to the case, but if the other parties don't have the money to pay, the municipal vaults are expected to open and pay what the others can't.

0950

The Conservative member from Perth–Wellington, my good friend Mr. Pettapiece, won unanimous consent from all parties on a private member's resolution a year ago, in February, four months before the June election, calling for a comprehensive long-term solution to the issue. Hints were given that—nudge, nudge, wink, wink—changes were on the way. Then there was an election, and bang, the Attorney General said, "We decided not to move forward with changes to joint and several liability cases," leaving municipal taxpayers on the hook.

Municipalities were treated shabbily. That decision has cost this government a great deal by way of a loss of credibility with municipal leaders. A trust has been broken, and so any changes the minister brings forth will certainly be scrutinized much more than ever before.

Let's look at development charges for a moment. We're all aware of the planning principle that growth should pay for growth. Councillors in the city of Windsor, for example, just recently voted unanimously to increase the residential development charges by 47% and to increase the commercial development charges by 150%. The increases will be phased in over a five-year period. That'll take residential development fees from just over \$18,000 to nearly \$27,000. Commercial charges will go from \$48.33 per square metre to \$120.99. Those new rates took effect just yesterday, on the 1st of June, up more than \$2,100 on a new home and more than \$18 a square foot on commercial permits. Why did they go up? For one thing, Windsor's development charges are the lowest in the province for a city of 200,000 or more. Mind you, there are still incentives for builders wishing to put up new projects within the older parts of the city such as in the downtown core.

Are there concerns from the builders? Absolutely. Do they predict we won't see much in the way of new homes being built? Absolutely.

By contrast, Speaker, let's go back to your area and talk about the Leamington example. In a bold move to spur new development, the municipality of Leamington did something totally different. The mayor and council in Leamington eliminated development fees all together: It's a three-year experiment. That move seems to have lit a fire under some local developers. For example, the Piroli group jumped in. Mayor John Paterson says there are two new subdivisions under way, including an \$80-million residential complex aimed at retirees. As you know, Speaker, down in Canada South, we have the 100 Mile Peninsula, and local realtors have been busy across the country attempting to bring retirees to Windsor and

Essex county. Three industrial projects are said to be in the works for Leamington, as well, because of the free development charges. Leamington needs an economic boost as much as any community. The H.J. Heinz plant has new owners, but it is not yet the economic generator as the former operation was to our region. Leamington used to charge almost \$13,000 in development fees. The town is using a reserve fund of nearly \$9 million to offer the free incentive to developers.

The Leamington example has kicked off development debates across the region. The town of Essex is now wrestling with a scaled-down initiative. Instead of offering a free deal, Essex has a half-price option on the table. Initially, town officials thought it would spark interest in the Harrow area of the town. However, councillors said, "Hey, why just Harrow? Why don't we do it all across the town?" So they're working on the wording now and will hold a special council meeting in a few weeks to tie up the loose ends. This, of course, is in sharp contrast to Windsor, as I referenced earlier. Some folks say we'll be losing new home buyers to the county; maybe, but with all due respect, the city has more services than the smaller towns, and with those services do come higher costs.

People have been moving to the suburbs for lifestyle choices, even though many of them still travel back and forth to the city for work, shopping or entertainment. Like I said, the basic principle has been "growth shall pay for growth." At least, that was the traditional method. So the jury is out until the final Leamington results are in, and the Essex experiment will have its own tale to tell.

Speaker, I know I've only been here less than two years at this point, and I accept that I still have a lot to learn about the way the Liberals do their business. But it's perplexing at times, and let me give you a prime example.

My friend from Etobicoke-Lakeshore Mr. Milczyn introduced a private member's bill, PMB 39, an amendment to the planning statutes. A key focus of his bill is inclusionary zoning. As a former city councillor in Toronto, the member is well aware that for years, New Democratic members, such as the member for Parkdale-High Park, Ms. DiNovo, and former members Rosario Marchese from Trinity-Spadina and Michael Prue from Beaches-East York, have had bills on the table calling for everything the new member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore has introduced.

It's a worthwhile history lesson, because inclusionary zoning would allow municipalities the ability to bring in planning bylaws that would guide developers who want to build 20 or more new housing units.

Mr. Milczyn's PMB would make it mandatory that developers make some of those new units available to people who require affordable housing. His bill is almost word for word that of Bill 5, introduced by the member for Parkdale-High Park, and her bill was based on the one that was introduced by the former member for Trinity-Spadina, Mr. Marchese. In fact, Ms. DiNovo has introduced her own inclusionary zoning bill five times in the past six years. The Liberals accepted these bills in the past but allowed them to languish in committee.

The question I have, Speaker—and I sincerely hope the minister will respond to it at some point—well, actually, I guess I have two questions. Why isn't Bill 39, introduced by the Liberal member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore, not a key component of Bill 73? Because it's all about smart growth in our communities.

The second part: If the Liberals accepted a bill—all of the previous bills on inclusionary zoning from the member for Parkdale-High Park and the former NDP members from Beaches-East York and Trinity-Spadina—why, during this review of the act, hasn't the wording of those bills been woven into this Bill 73?

Surely, even if you don't want to credit New Democrats with a good idea, put it in there and credit your own member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore, a former city councillor in Toronto. By the way, Speaker, a number of downtown councillors in Toronto have already put in place an informal inclusionary zoning policy on their own, because they grew tired of the lip service from this Liberal government.

Speaking of lip service, let's turn for a moment to the Ontario Municipal Board.

The Liberals have promised for years—since 2003, actually—that they were going to rein in the powers of the OMB. Now, in all fairness, this bill does change the wording on some OMB issues, but it really does nothing to harness the extraordinary powers of the OMB.

Speaker, just in case you may hold the opinion that each and every province and each American state has a similar board with equal powers—not a chance; not even close. We, in the Ontario bubble, may think giving such extraordinary powers to a planning tribunal is the norm. It is anything but. Nowhere else can planning appeal tribunals make up their own rules. Elsewhere, they follow the rules that have been adopted by provincial, state or municipal authorities. Only elected members of government are supposed to create policy and write laws. The Liberals have given the OMB too much power.

1000

Speaker, you remember Bill Davis. I do. He was a pretty good Premier—a Conservative. Back in his day, the Conservatives, under pressure from voters, overturned, by cabinet decision, the OMB decision which approved the Spadina Expressway in Toronto. Unfortunately and inexplicably, this Liberal government back in 2009 gave away its power to review OMB decisions. Go figure. No one knows why; no one understand it; no one gets it, especially those who get hit by really outrageous appeal decisions by the OMB.

Here's an example, and this is why we were hoping for a better bill. It's a sad story from the region of Waterloo. The good folks there spent 10 years developing an official plan—10 years, they worked on it. The intent was to curb urban sprawl. The intent was to encourage transit-friendly, compact development. The local politicians endorsed the plan; the community got behind it. The provincial government gave it their stamp of approval because it fit perfectly into the government's Places to Grow Act.

Speaker, you'll recall that that act was designed to prevent urban sprawl. But lo and behold, some developers appealed, and the Ontario Municipal Board stepped in and said, "Too bad, so sad," and allowed a sprawling development that is more than 10 times what everyone else had approved and endorsed. Imagine: You spend 10 years working on a plan that wins wide support; then the OMB steps in, and army boots clump all over you.

Municipalities are used to being gored by the OMB, but in the Waterloo region they took a huge chunk out of the credibility of the provincial government as well. They basically ripped up the Places to Grow Act by virtue of this ruling.

The region is appealing. The province said it would, but unless I'm mistaken—I could be wrong—I don't think those appeal papers have been filed. The decision came down in January 2013: Ten times the sprawl, a great loss of farmland, much less green space, and increased threats to the groundwater. Shame on the OMB.

Here are a couple of more examples of how this bill could have been improved, and they both have to do with the OMB. A couple of years ago in Richmond Hill, the town council passed a parks plan. It had a formula for parkland dedication and it was based on the number of units in any new development. That makes sense to me. I hope it makes sense to you: The more people, the more need for park space. But the developers objected to the OMB—surprise, surprise. The result? No surprise: The OMB rewrote the rules that the councillors had laboured long and hard over. The OMB ruled that it doesn't matter whether you build new units for 75 people or 750; the parkland dedication should be the same.

Imagine, Speaker; get a picture of this in your mind: a little bit of green space; 75 families using that little bit of green space. Now picture this: Push them aside, put 750 families on that same little space that 75 people had occupied, and the OMB says, "Yes, that's okay." I don't get it; I hope you don't get it either. Something just doesn't compute with OMB decisions.

That's another reason why we were hoping for real changes in the act to the Ontario Municipal Board. No one—and I repeat, no one—at that appeal argued for that. The OMB just made it up, made it a rule, pulled a number out of thin air: 25%. That's right: 25%. To the OMB, parkland dedications for developments denser than 75 units would be capped at 25% of the lands being developed. It would be cheaper for the developers to pay the cash and go laughing all the way to the bank. In fact, the commissioner of planning and regulation services for Richmond Hill says that this decision will lead to less parkland and will shortchange the town's parks plan by \$70 million—\$70 million in one community. That's what this OMB decision will cost the good people of Richmond Hill. Why isn't real OMB reform a major part of this bill?

Unelected members of the Ontario Municipal Board making up crap like this on the fly, undoing the hard work and long hours of study the elected officials of Richmond Hill put into the parks plan—no wonder the town is appealing this decision.

My friend Karen Scian is a former councillor in the city of Waterloo—actually, she refers to herself as a "recovering" city councillor, not a "former" one. She has a blog called Bein' Scian. Early last month, she wrote about the OMB and its decision to favour the out-of-town developer of a new Costco on the city's west side. It's a dispute over traffic flow and who should pay for what. The elected council in Waterloo voted to ensure the developer paid because the existing infrastructure wouldn't be able to handle the huge increase in extra traffic—in other words, as we talked about before, development should pay for development, growth should pay for growth—but the OMB felt otherwise, and that case is also under appeal.

The Liberals have been promising OMB reform since they ran on it as a campaign plank in the 2003 campaign, and we are still waiting. You can't fix Ontario's land use planning system unless and until you fix the OMB.

So the developers in Ontario have friends on the OMB. When it comes to inclusionary zoning, the home builders in Ontario have friends in the Liberal government. Otherwise, a person of rational thought and common sense would deduce what else would be preventing inclusionary zoning from being a part of any Smart Growth for Our Communities Act. We all know we need more affordable housing in this province. Inclusionary zoning would help with that tremendously. Instead of lip service, those most in need of better and safer housing that is affordable need action, and they need it now.

It's not only the tenants who are expecting more in this bill. Landlords were also hoping their cries would be heard as well. They've been lobbying the minister for reforms. Many of them get stuck with enormous energy and water bills from their local utility providers. In most cases, lease arrangements put the onus on the tenant to pay for the heat and water, but when the tenant skips out of town, leaving unpaid bills behind, the landlords get stuck with the bill.

Landlords are looking for legislation that allows them to track whether the people that are living in their buildings are keeping up to date on their utility bills. I accept, Speaker, that there is a right-to-privacy issue here, but I can also see the other side of this coin, where a good landlord, operating on a small margin, can lose his or her investment if too many renters skip town without paying their bills. I would hope the minister's creative staff can at some point turn their thoughts to this dilemma and make it more of an equal playing field. This actually might encourage some landlords to build more affordable housing because they tell me there is little incentive these days to create new stock when they keep getting hammered from all sides. Energy bills keep going up. People have to put food on the table. It becomes a question of priorities within the family. As we've heard in this House before, the sale of Hydro One will lead to higher energy rates as private owners expect to earn a profit on their investment. Some people will continue to skip out on their bills, leaving bills owing, and the landlords will continue to be hit with bills that they didn't expect.

Let me turn at this point, Speaker, to conversations I've had recently with municipal politicians of all political stripes. Smart growth for their communities comes in varying ways. For example, in Leamington and Kingsville, those communities could grow if this minister and his friend the Minister of Energy, and their friend the Minister of Economic Development and Infrastructure, would find a way to fast-track more hydro lines coming in to supply commercial and industrial users, especially in the greenhouse sector. Major players are leaving Ontario and opening new businesses in Ohio and elsewhere because there's not enough available hydro for their planned growth in Leamington and Kingsville.

We'll leave the discussion about the cost of hydro for another day, but the supply of hydro has been promised for years by this government. Former Energy Minister Dwight Duncan made a commitment, and the people in Essex county are still waiting. They would also benefit from the promised completion of the Bruce Crozier highway, the widening of Highway 3 in the Essex-Kingsville-Leamington area, so that agriculture produce can move efficiently, and commuter and tourist traffic is not imperilled.

I hope all current ministers—indeed, all current Liberal members—live long and prosper, and if by chance they're fortunate enough at some point to have a stretch of highway named in their honour, I hope the government of the day keeps its word and completes whatever highway improvement it is. Because it is a slight to the memory of a great guy, Bruce Crozier, a long-time member of this House: a member of the House for 18 years; eight years as a Deputy Speaker, perhaps the longest term ever served by a member of this House as Deputy Speaker. Prior to that, he was a town councillor in Leamington for three years, mayor for five or six years; elected to this House in a by-election when Remo Mancini, the former Liberal member for Essex, retired from provincial politics.

Bruce Crozier was a true gentleman known for his colourful collection of bow ties that he always wore. I recall my leader, the member for Hamilton Centre, Ms. Horwath, saying that Bruce was a "voice of dignity and civility," which, as you know, Speaker, is something some of us would like to see more of these days. He was revered. He was a man of honour who fought for his community and stopped rural schools from closing in his riding. He won the respect of supporters from all parties by the way he conducted himself in and out of this House. It is a slight to his memory that transportation priorities have shifted despite the evidence of the need in Essex county, and there are no immediate plans to improve a highway that is fast becoming notorious for the number of serious and fatal accidents.

I wish to personally thank the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Mr. McMeekin, for his support of the private member's bill introduced recently by my friend from Essex calling for this badly needed highway to be put back on the government's priority list. We won't forget your support, Minister, and neither will the

people in Essex county forget the indifference shown by the rest of your party towards the memory of Bruce Crozier.

Speaker, I could go on for another half-hour. I'm just looking at this point to whether you want me to continue, or do you want to take a break for the morning?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I'd like to thank the member. We will continue debate at a later point in time.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Since it is close to 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30.

The House recessed from 1013 to 1030.

WEARING OF PINS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The minister responsible for seniors, on a point of order.

Hon. Mario Sergio: Mr. Speaker, I am seeking unanimous consent to wear the Italian Heritage Month pin today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The minister responsible for seniors is seeking unanimous consent to wear pins to recognize Italian Heritage Month. Do we agree? Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Speaker, I'd like to introduce a constituent of mine. I won't introduce the other one; I'll leave that to you. Suzanne van Bommel is here. Welcome to the Legislature.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member gets high marks.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: We're joined today by some young people from the town of Oakville. Please welcome Alex Wellstead, Sam Galea, Eric Mariglia, Justin Ortiz, Jovan Sahi, Sarah Figueroa and Caitlin Mehrotra, who are all members of the Oakville Provincial Youth Advisory Committee.

Mr. Robert Bailey: On behalf of MPP Tim Hudak, Niagara West—Glanbrook, I'd like to introduce our page captain today, Duncan Cruickshank, and, in the west members' gallery, his father, John Cruickshank, and mother, Julie Cruickshank, accompanied by his sisters, Meredith and Jillian Cruickshank. They're in the members' gallery this morning.

Hon. Jeff Leal: I'd like to welcome the Ontario Craft Cider Association here with us today—and a reminder that there will be a wonderful reception from 5:30 to 7 in rooms 228 and 230.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I would like to welcome students from the Arthur Christian School, who are visiting the Legislature today.

Mr. Bob Delaney: On behalf of page Megan Sweetman—my page; she's from Mississauga—Streetsville—I'm here to welcome her grandmother Sandra Norris. She

will be in the members' gallery this morning. Welcome back.

M^{me} Gila Martow: On a plus de 100 étudiants ici de la région d'Hamilton avec leurs parents et peut-être leurs enseignants, avec mon ami Stewart Kiff. Bienvenue.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: On behalf of MPP Han Dong, Trinity-Spadina, I wish to welcome page captain Julien Jouan and his mother, Danielle Vadius. She will be in the members' gallery this morning. Welcome.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Please join me in welcoming, from the beautiful town of Caledon, Mayor Allan Thompson, in the Speaker's gallery, as well as Tom Wilson from Spirit Tree Cidery, and some other guy who looks vaguely familiar.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: It is with great pleasure that I would like to welcome in the Legislature, in the east gallery, our page captain's family: his father, Stephen Heckbert; his aunt Mary; and his uncle Mike Heckbert. I would like a round of applause to say welcome to the Legislature, and thank you for being here today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome, and thank you.

Mr. Monte McNaughton: I'm honoured today to introduce to the House, and welcome to the Legislature, Sandra Norris from Grand Bend. She's the proud grandmother of page Megan.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It's a pleasure this morning to introduce, from the great riding of Chatham-Kent-Essex but originally from Hepworth: Marguerite Davis. Marguerite, welcome.

Mr. Norm Miller: I'm pleased to welcome Shena Terry, who is from Milford Bay in my riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka. She is the mother of page Jessica Terry and is here in the east public gallery this morning. Please welcome her.

Miss Monique Taylor: I'm pleased to welcome 100 students—I don't think they're all in the House yet today—from École secondaire Académie catholique Mère-Teresa; as well as Nancy Baverstock, who is the chair of #ActionACMT; Joanne Bouchard, member of #ActionACMT; Mark Power, partner of Power Law; Didier Letarte-Bérubé, who is the student representative; Melinda Chartrand, the president; and Benoit Mercier, president of the francophone Ontario school trustee association. I welcome them all to Queen's Park today. Speaker, they're here to ask the minister to please fund their Catholic school.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome people who have travelled a long way to get here, all the way from Attawapiskat, Ontario: the students at Kattawapiskak school, which is a school we rebuilt, which took 15 years, after a fuel spill up in that community. I'd like to welcome them to the Legislature.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further introductions? Last call for introductions.

With us today in the Speaker's gallery are members from the Ontario Craft Cider Association, who will be showcasing their cider this evening at the craft cider reception in 228-230 from 5:30 to 7:30.

Also with us is the mayor of Caledon, Allan Thompson, who has been introduced.

Also with us is Steve Peters, the principal adviser for the GPS Group, and also the former member for Elgin-Middlesex-London in the 37th, 38th and 39th Parliaments, and Speaker of the House in the 39th Parliament—Steve Peters.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Speaker, they asked where Joe was. Thank you.

It is now time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION PLAN

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is for the Premier. Today the Ontario Chamber of Commerce released a letter outlining needed changes to your payroll pension tax. Over 150 businesses, including 57 local chambers of commerce and some of the province's largest employers, have signed that letter. They know your payroll tax will kill jobs in Ontario. These employers outlined many of the same concerns that we raised back in April as part of our five budget asks.

Premier, anyone reading the chamber's letter would come to the same conclusion we came to long ago, that your pension plan is the wrong way to go. So I ask you, will you do the right thing and withdraw your damaging pension plan payroll tax?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Well, it's interesting, because I read that article, and I understand that there are questions being asked. But I also know that a fundamental part of the development of this plan is conversation with businesses and individuals around the province. Our Associate Minister of Finance has been doing that work, because that's how good policy gets written.

Good policy is written by listening to the people who are on the front lines, listening to the businesses who understand what the impacts will be. But at the end of the day, it is extremely important that people in Ontario—and, I would argue, across this country—have security in their retirement, that they do not work their lifetime and then retire into poverty. Our Ontario Retirement Pension Plan is about providing that security for people when they are finished their work life.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary? The member from York-Simcoe.

Mrs. Julia Munro: Speaker, again to the Premier: Currently, the Ontario registered pension plan won't exempt employers who offer a defined contribution plan or group RRSPs, even though both plans provide a far higher rate of return. Instead, you're going to punish business owners who already look after their employees' retirements by forcing them to pay yet another burdensome tax. Employers can't afford to pay both. We all

know they'll cancel the only one they're allowed to cancel: the higher-paying plan they already offer.

So again, Premier, before it's too late, will you walk away from the ORPP?

1040

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I know that the Associate Minister of Finance is going to want to comment in the supplementary. But the fact is that the vast majority of Ontarians—77% of Ontarians—support an increase in pension benefits. They know what they are being presented with in their retirement and as they look forward to the retirement of their children and their grandchildren, which is why organizations like CARP are supportive of, first of all, an enhancement of the Canada Pension Plan, which the federal government has decided not to do. But secondly, if that's not possible, they're supportive of the Ontario government stepping up and taking that action.

Those people are living in every riding in this province. Across this province, people are not able to save enough for their retirement. They know that. They're concerned about their own retirement and they're concerned about the retirement of their children and their grandchildren.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Mrs. Julia Munro: This isn't just a message from the opposition bench. These are some of Ontario's largest employers who have signed this letter: General Motors, Ford, Canadian Tire, Walmart, Magna. The list goes on. There are associations ranging from mining to hospitality, from manufacturers to farmers. There is across-the-board opposition to the Liberal payroll tax. Between skyrocketing energy rates, a looming carbon tax and your payroll tax, the cost of doing business in Ontario is far too high and is costing jobs. Employers in Ontario are telling the government enough is enough.

Premier, why won't you listen and withdraw the ORPP bill?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Associate Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: I want to thank the members opposite for the question.

In fact, we are very much engaged with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and its members. We've met with dozens of companies and the associations representing those companies because we know that pensions are very important. We know that retirement security is a very important issue in this province. As the Premier has said, 77% of Ontarians believe that enhancements to retirement benefits are needed. We're taking leadership on this issue.

Through the consultations that we've done across this province, we have heard differing views on what is deemed to be comparable. Some folks would prefer universality while others would prefer a narrower definition. What's important is that we're analyzing this feedback and we're going to be making decisions for the people of this province.

ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION PLAN

Mr. Jim Wilson: Back to the Premier, Mr. Speaker: The auto industry has been the backbone of Ontario's economy for decades. When you took power, Premier, almost one in five Ontarians was employed by the automotive and parts manufacturing industry. As your government's energy policies and many other policies have driven jobs out of the economy, it's now only one in eight. Ontario needs to remain competitive in the auto industry. The industry won't be able to survive if your mandatory pension plan makes our economy even less competitive—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Beaches—East York.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Premier, will you, at the very least, expand the comparable pension definition—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Beaches—East York, second time.

Mr. Jim Wilson: —to help protect the auto industry, as they and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce have asked in their letter today?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure is going to want to speak specifically to the auto sector. But I would just again repeat to the Leader of the Opposition that it is extremely important that the people of this province—no matter where they work, no matter what sector they work in—have the prospect in their retirement of a secure retirement.

We know that there are many people, many young people, who are not able to save enough. That is why we have made the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan a fundamental pillar of our economic plan, because that kind of security is important for individuals and families. It's also important for society, because if those very businesses, in a number of years, are confronting a society where there is a generation of people who don't have the wherewithal, everyone will have to pay, everyone will have to deal with that reality. We are thinking ahead and we are putting in place the supports that we know people will need.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Excuse me, I should have said the member from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, not the member from Beaches—East York.

The member from Wellington—Halton Hills.

Mr. Ted Arnott: My question is also for the Premier. In a letter addressed to the Premier, which was made public today, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and a large coalition of companies, including General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler, are urging the Premier to allow defined contribution plans to be considered as comparable plans and allow them to be exempted from the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan. Defined contribution plans are more affordable for employers but still offer some measure of retirement security for employees.

Mr. Speaker, the auto industry needs to have the option to switch to defined contribution pension plans for their workers in the future so they can remain competitive and continue to assemble vehicles in Ontario over the long term.

Will the Premier commit to making defined contribution plans comparable?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The Associate Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: I want to thank the member opposite for the question.

We've actually met with many members of the auto sector to talk about the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan and the plans that they currently have.

Mr. Speaker, we know that there are very generous defined contribution plans that exist. At the same time, we have to balance the fact that people need a predictable stream of income into retirement that they can rely on. With the feedback that we have received, we are in the process of looking at who is going to be affected by the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan and who are the members that will be required to be part of this plan.

We want to ensure, at the end of the day, that we strengthen retirement security for people in this province so that when they retire they will have that income that they will rely on in their senior years. That is the focus of the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Mr. Ted Arnott: Again, back to the Premier: The fact remains that sky-high electricity prices, high taxes and excessive red tape have already cost us hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs and thousands of jobs in the auto sector. Many are going south of the border, and we're losing out on new job-creating investment.

The ORPP means higher payroll costs for business and less take-home pay for workers, and it will only exacerbate the trend of lost manufacturing jobs.

The Premier should know that GM's commitment to Oshawa expires next year, yet the government is consciously and deliberately making it harder for GM to stay.

Will the Premier recognize the folly of her policy and take this simple step which will give hope to auto workers that their future employment will remain secure?

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: Mr. Speaker, we are the only government that is committed to enhancing retirement security for Ontarians. We know that Ontarians are not saving enough and that we need to take action now to ensure that people are prepared for their retirement.

Economists agree—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: Economists agree that we need to take action. Just today, CIBC's deputy chief economist, Benjamin Tal, stated: "Add it all up, and there are some 5.8 million working-age Canadians who will see more than a 20% drop in their living standards upon retirement."

He went on to say, "That's why the time to act is now."

Mr. Speaker, that's why we are acting, with the implementation of the ORPP.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Yesterday, the Premier said, "What we have to do as government is ... take a position, which we did in our platform and in our budget. We have to explain that position, and then we have to move forward."

The problem is, the Premier has two positions. Not only did she not run on the sell-off of Hydro One, but in October, months after the election, she said, "We're not selling off the assets." And her finance minister said, "We are not going to sell off our assets."

Now she's claiming that selling off Hydro One was the plan all along.

If the Premier can't decide, how about she lets Ontarians decide through a referendum?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We've been very clear on our plan to maximize assets. Let me just go through this again. We talked about it before, during and after the 2014 election.

In an April 11 news release, Hydro One was in the headline—"The Ontario government has appointed a council to recommend ways to improve the efficiency and optimize the full value of Hydro One...."

It was featured in our election platform. It's mentioned three times in our 2014 budget—"will look at maximizing and unlocking value from assets it currently holds, including real estate holdings as well as crown corporations such as" OPG, Hydro One and the LCBO.

1050

Page 164 of our budget: "Valuable assets include large and complex government business enterprises ... such as the LCBO, Hydro One and OPG ... the government will launch an in-depth review process."

We were very clear that in order to pay for transit and transportation infrastructure, we needed to leverage those assets.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier is trying to go back in time and say it was her plan all along to sell Hydro One and that she was clear about that with Ontarians. But in April of this year, a constituent wrote to his local Liberal MPP because he'd heard, for the first time, that the Liberals were selling Hydro One. He was told by that Liberal MPP's office that "reports regarding ... Hydro One are premature" and that "no final decisions have been made" about Hydro One. Now, those back-bench MPPs are going to have to explain to their constituents that the sell-off was the plan all along—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Start the clock. Order, please.

Please finish.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Those backbenchers are going to have to explain to their constituents that this was the plan all along. Speaker, Ontarians deserve—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I will immediately start warning individuals who are starting to shout people down.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Ontarians deserve honesty, Speaker, and the Premier needs to listen to them. Will she hold a referendum on the sell-off?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: As I have said, we were very clear that we were going to review the assets that were owned by the people of Ontario in order to unlock their value to invest in infrastructure that's needed.

You have to remember that this line of questioning that the leader of the third party is on is a direct attack on the investment in infrastructure that is needed in this province. The leader of the third party has no plan. She has no solution for how to invest in infrastructure. The fact is, she ran on exactly the same fiscal plan that we had, apart from the fact that she said she would take \$600 million more out of the budget than we had put forward. But she has no plan for how she would invest in the roads and the bridges and the transit that are needed across this province in order for us to be competitive.

The fact is that the explanation that needs to come from the leader of the third party is how would she make those investments? Or would she just cancel the projects that are already under way and planned?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier said to me yesterday that she was "explicit in our budget and in our platform and then in our budget again" about her plan to sell Hydro One, but the fact is her own finance minister didn't know, Liberal MPPs didn't know and, as of April, her MPPs were telling constituents that it was "premature." Just in April, it was "premature" to be talking about the sell-off of Hydro One.

A referendum would be explicit, Speaker: Yes or no. Maybe that would help the Liberal backbenchers figure out where they stand on this issue.

Will this Premier agree to a referendum on the sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I would suggest we all just worry about our own team. How about that? We'll all just worry about our own team. I've got my team.

What my team understands is that there was a process. We said we were going to look at our assets and we were going to make decisions—some of them very difficult, but some of them necessary in order to make—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: —decisions that were necessary in order to make good on the fundamental commitment that we made to invest in infrastructure in this province.

It's true. At some point along the way, final decisions had not been made. But the decision has been made now,

Mr. Speaker. We are going to make those investments—not something that the leader of the third party supports.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I worry about Ontarians. That's who I worry about.

My next question is to the Premier. The Premier says that she ran on selling Hydro One, but for months before and after the election, she denied that. Now she's denying her denial. I don't blame Ontarians for wondering what is going on with this Premier.

What's been very clear and consistent this entire time is that the people of this province cannot afford this wrong-headed scheme to sell off Hydro One.

Will the Premier settle this nonsense once and for all, put an end to the double speak and agree to a Hydro One referendum so the people can have their say?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What we cannot afford to do in this province is not invest in the infrastructure that we need. All the questions about jobs and the questions about the economy and the questions about business in this province, whether it's auto sector or whether it's aerospace or whether it's high tech, all of those industries are looking to government to make the infrastructure investments that they need. That's part of creating the conditions so that businesses can thrive, so that more business will come here.

The fact is we are the number one jurisdiction for foreign direct investment again this year. We're not going to stay there if we don't make the investments in infrastructure that are needed. What we are committed to doing is making those investments. The third party doesn't support that. I get that, but the fact is we have made a commitment to invest in that infrastructure and we're going to do it.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Ontarians were kept in the dark about the Premier's plan to sell Hydro One. Liberal cabinet ministers were left in the dark about the Premier's plan to sell Hydro One. Liberal MPPs were kept in the dark; they kept their constituents in the dark about this plan. The Premier kept everyone in the dark. Now she's tying herself in knots to claim that this was her plan all along.

Will the Premier put all of this to rest and simply give Ontarians the say that they deserve on this issue and hold a referendum on the sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, I would just say to the leader of the third party, it was very clear in our budget, in our platform and in our budget again that we were looking at assets, and that we were looking at the sale of assets. We talked about the crown corporations. We talked about the review that was happening. We talked about the GM shares. We talked about real estate.

It was so clear that the leader of the third party said this on July 9, 2014: "The budget says in black and white that the government is looking at the sale of assets, 'including ... crown corporations, such as Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario.'"

It was so clear that we were looking at how we would leverage those assets that even the leader of the third party understood.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I was just pointing out how sneaky the Premier was being in that quote.

Ontarians are sending a very clear message: Stop the sell-off of Hydro One.

First, the Liberals said selling Hydro One was a terrible idea. Then the Premier said she's thinking about selling Hydro One or, to be more specific, she is thinking of recycling legacy assets. She said she's not selling Hydro One. Then she said she's selling Hydro One. Then she said she never said she wasn't selling Hydro One. The Premier has more versions of this story than Pat Sorbara has job offers for Andrew Olivier.

Will this Premier stop this nonsense once and for all and agree to do the right thing by the people of this province and hold a referendum on the sell-off of Hydro One?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

1100

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Once again, we made a decision that it was critical that we invest in the infrastructure that's needed in this province, across the province—roads, bridges and transit. In order to do that, there needed to be funding. There needed to be revenue in order to do that. We needed money in order to make that investment.

We reviewed our assets and there was a process. I will say to the leader of the third party and to Ontarians: This has not been an easy decision. This is not an easy decision on the part of the members of this party, of this government, but we know that if we don't make those investments in infrastructure that will be irresponsible. It would be irresponsible for us to not invest in the infrastructure that is needed for future generations, whether it's the businesses of this province or whether it's the individuals who are having trouble getting around because of gridlock. Those investments must be made. We made a commitment and that's what we're going to do.

BEAR CONTROL

Mr. Jeff Yurek: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry. Minister, yesterday police were forced to shoot a bear because the MNR was unable to respond in time. Even though the bear had been sighted on the weekend and staff received a call at 6:30

Monday morning, the MNR was not prepared. Why was the MNR unprepared and unresponsive?

Hon. Bill Mauro: In fact, the member should know, if he was following this incident in the newspapers, that the MNRF was prepared. Right through the entire weekend they provided the technical assistance—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Bill Mauro: Right through the incident over the course of the weekend the MNRF provided the technical assistance that exists in the protocol between police forces across the province of Ontario and the MNRF. They did that.

When the call came in for assistance—I believe it was Monday morning around 6:30—the MNRF began to mobilize their forces as required and did their best to respond to the scene. That's the way it transpired; that's the way it went down.

Unfortunately, I will say, we know that the incident ended in a way that no one wanted to see. The animal had to be put down. That's an unfortunate result. Having said that, in direct response to the member's questions, the MNRF was there and doing what they were expected to do under the protocol.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Back to the Minister: There's no reason at all that the ministry couldn't mobilize on a Saturday or a Sunday when they first heard about the bear and be ready to roll.

Minister, last year your colleague the former Minister of Natural Resources, David Oraziotti, was quoted as saying: "When you look at incidents in schoolyards when children can't go out for recess, teachers wearing bear whistles, city police officers having to shoot black bears in the middle of communities in northern Ontario, it's not acceptable." Do you not agree with your colleague? However, you said yesterday that nuisance bears were not the responsibility of the MNR.

Minister, you're minimizing public safety. Have you downloaded your responsibility to the municipalities?

Hon. Bill Mauro: When a sighting is reported to the MNRF, if the MNRF, according to your question, was expected to respond in some way, shape or form—I don't know what it is you expect they would do—the MNRF would be all over the province all of the time, 24/7, when there's a sighting. That's not what they do. It's not what they did five or 10 years ago and it's not what they're expected to do today. It is unacceptable that you would expect that that would be a requirement of the MNRF.

When they got the call that the animal had been localized, they responded as per the protocol that exists between local police forces and the MNRF. It's unfortunate that the animal had to be put down.

I would say: This is not a question of resources, as was implied by the member yesterday in the media. That is not at all the case. In fact, MNRF spends far more money today on an annual basis than they did when that member's party was in power.

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

Mr. Peter Tabuns: This is a question to the Premier. Last year, the Ontario Energy Board approved a request by Enbridge Gas for an incredible 40% increase in the price of natural gas, equal to a \$400 increase per family, per year.

One of the two board members who approved that request was Marika Hare. We've learned that Ms. Hare worked for Enbridge for 15 years and served as its director of regulatory affairs. Now the Premier has promoted Ms. Hare to be vice-chair of the Ontario Energy Board.

Why is the government stacking the Ontario Energy Board with people who built careers fighting for the energy industry instead of people who fight for consumers and Ontario families?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The Ontario Energy Board has tremendous credibility as an independent agency. It does its job; it does it well. The reality is, they're dealing with technical issues and they need technical people on the board who understand the sector, representing the people of Ontario after they're appointed.

To suggest that somebody who has extensive—
Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, to suggest that somebody who has extensive experience in the sector is not qualified to sit on a board that deals with these issues is just wrong.

The Ontario Energy Board has provisions that deal with conflict of interest. They can declare their interest the same as any other board, whether it's a crown corporation or a private sector company. They have rules about conflict of interest, but they also seek out—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.
Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Last week, I pointed out that the government was stacking the Ontario Energy Board with energy industry insiders, and I asked the Minister of Energy how such people could be trusted to put the interests of Ontario families ahead of the interests of the energy industry.

The minister said that conflict-of-interest guidelines would protect Ontario families at the OEB. We now know that these individual conflict-of-interest guidelines do not prevent OEB members from approving 40% rate increases on behalf of their former employers.

With the Ontario Energy Board now stacked with energy industry insiders, why should Ontarians trust that the board will stop massive electricity rate increases on behalf of a privatized Hydro One?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the member would know that after that increase he referred to was made, the Ontario Energy Board made rulings which significantly reduced them, balanced them out and spread them over time. When the announcement was made for those reductions, we never heard a peep from that particular member.

The gas rates today in Ontario are much better than they were five, six, seven or eight years ago, and that's because of the Ontario Energy Board.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

AFFAIRES AUTOCHTONES

M. John Fraser: Ma question est pour le ministre des Affaires autochtones.

Last Sunday, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission began its closing events with a walk for reconciliation from Gatineau to Ottawa city hall. Over 11,000 people attended, and I had the honour of joining you, the Attorney General and the member from Ottawa-Orléans at the walk to show the commitment of this government to renewing its relationship with our aboriginal partners.

Mr. Speaker, it was really quite impressive to see people from different walks of life and different ages—a number of people were there—and their faces really left a lasting impression on me.

We know that the residential school system is one of the darkest times in Canadian history. Approximately 150,000 children and youth were taken from their homes and placed in schools, often by force.

The commission was established in June 2008 to ensure that the stories of survivors from the residential schools are not forgotten. Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: Can the minister please inform the House on the mandate of the commission?

Hon. David Zimmer: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was indeed a solemn moment. The commission is gathering stories from survivors and providing recommendations to governments so our history is not forgotten.

In 2012, the commission released an interim report which found residential schools constituted an assault on aboriginal children and families, and aboriginal communities and their cultures.

The commission also released a series of recommendations for the federal and provincial governments. Speaker, this government is following up on those recommendations.

As Ontario's Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, I have visited over 50 First Nations in the last two years. I have met with aboriginal leaders and members of the communities from all corners of the province. I have come to understand that as peoples we share a difficult history.

Today, the commission will release its final report. There is a moral imperative to deal with the commission's recommendation. That's why our Premier—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.
Supplementary?

1110

Mr. John Fraser: Of course, we were led on Sunday by the Premier, who was there as well.

Le mois de juin est le Mois national de l'histoire autochtone. Ce mois, nous honorons le rôle important des Premières Nations, des Inuits et des Métis au Canada, et

nous reflétons sur l'histoire, les sacrifices, les contributions, la culture et la force de ces communautés.

With almost 300,000 First Nation, Métis and Inuit people, the province of Ontario has Canada's largest aboriginal population. We know that understanding the history and culture of aboriginal people in Ontario leads to a better friendship between aboriginal people and Ontarians. For reconciliation to succeed, all Canadians need to understand the history we share with our aboriginal peoples.

This month, being National Aboriginal History Month, presents an opportunity for all Ontarians to become more aware of our true and shared history, aboriginal culture and the contributions aboriginal communities make.

Can the minister please update this House on his experience at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission?

Hon. David Zimmer: We will continue to support our aboriginal partners' efforts to restore the vitality of their culture, which is central to their communities. We will continue to do our part to educate and raise awareness among Canadians of our shared history and the painful place residential schools have in it.

One of the most important steps we can take is education and awareness of the non-aboriginal community. The Ministry of Education has partnered with First Nations and my ministry to develop resources that will assist educators in planning student learning about residential schools.

Ontario is also working in partnership with aboriginal people and communities to create awareness through our three-year treaty engagement and public awareness strategy. The reason we are doing that is because in Ontario, we are all treaty peoples. Whether we're aboriginal or non-aboriginal, we are all treaty peoples.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Steve Clark: My question is to the Premier. Your Hydro One fire sale leaves seniors who call me about soaring electricity costs for Hydro One billing nowhere to turn for help. You're putting Hydro beyond the reach of MPPs, the Ombudsman—everyone.

The minister responsible for seniors knows that's wrong, because he once said, "There is nothing the public of Ontario ... will benefit from with the sale of Hydro One...."

"That is why we should try to protect this wonderful facility which, if sold, will not come back into the hands of the people of Ontario anymore."

Premier, did the minister even try to stand up for seniors before you asked him to abandon his principles, or did he just roll over like the rest of your cabinet?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, the member somehow thinks that the programs that we have to mitigate rates will not continue. We have significant programs to mitigate rates, including the Ontario Energy and Property Tax Credit, which gives qualified seniors up to \$1,041 back per year. We still have in place the program that

gives a 10% reduction on all bills. We also have in place a low-income program which gives up to \$600. We're implementing another low-cost program that will give a family with an income of \$28,000 and four children \$525 back on their electricity bill. They will continue to go forward on our agenda.

It's a false conclusion that he's making that rates are going to go up, and in the supplementary I'll talk about the Ontario Energy Board, which that party also supported.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Steve Clark: Yesterday, our leader, Patrick Brown, launched a petition against giving away this invaluable public asset. It's a good petition, Speaker, but you know what? I've found one I like better. Your Minister of Northern Development and Mines proudly read it into the record on May 15, 2002:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to encourage Ernie Eves to take Dalton McGuinty's advice to put working families ahead of his Bay Street friends by immediately stopping the sale of Hydro One."

Premier Eves did the right thing in 2002. He listened to Ontarians who signed that minister's petition. Will you respect the thousands of Ontarians signing our petition today at stopthehydrofiresale.ca by pulling the plug on this bad deal?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please. Be seated, please.

Start the clock. Minister.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The party opposite has a strange memory. They issued a policy paper only about a year and a half or so ago where they were proposing to sell off to the private sector significant interests in Hydro One and OPG.

And what were they going to rely on to protect seniors? Their white paper stated specifically that they recognized—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Leeds–Grenville, second time. The member from Nipissing, second time.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: —that consumer prices would continue to be protected and regulated by the Ontario Energy Board. That's their paper.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Nipissing is warned. Carry on.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Speaking of their new leader—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Leeds–Grenville is warned.

Wrap up.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Okay, one sentence, Mr. Speaker. The quote from the leader of the PC Party: "I generally believe that the private sector could do a better job than the public sector. I generally think"—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. After the warning comes the naming.
New question.

CLASS SIZE

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: My question it to the Premier. Yesterday, the Minister of Education claimed that class size caps are not on the table. In reality, we know there are efforts to replace hard cap language with flexible guideline language. Either the minister has no idea what is being discussed at the table or she is experiencing cognitive dissonance.

The facts are clear: The removal of class size caps means less one-on-one time for our kids, less resources for kids with special needs and less time spent with kids with ESL needs. Is the Premier committed to throwing our schools further into chaos by removing class size caps? Yes or no?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Education.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I think it's important to make clear that at the central table there are actually three parties. There's the union representing the workers; there is the school board association representing the boards, the employers; and there is the government, the crown. And what I think you will find, if you check the record, is that I said that the government did not have class size caps on the table. I think what you would also find, if you checked the record of Mr. Barrett, the president of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, is that, as they have said, they do have that. So what I said was 100% accurate.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: If I understood that correctly, then the government side is not in support of lifting the class size caps, so we can look forward to those caps remaining next year.

Back to the Premier: Again, either the minister has no idea what is being discussed at the table or she is prepared to allow our kids to fall behind. Class size caps matter. Flexible guideline language has no real meaning and is not enforceable. Our kids deserve better than being forced into overcrowded classrooms so the government can save a buck. Families and students deserve more than a \$250-million-in-year cut to education on top of more than a decade of underfunding. Kids need one-on-one time, and they should not pay the price for short-sighted Liberal cuts. Will the Premier commit to holding the line on class size caps and guarantee families and students that there will be no change to class size caps in the fall?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I don't think that there's much point in saying, "He said, she said," but I think there is a lot of point in understanding the way the funding model works.

Mr. Paul Miller: You should have changed that funding model.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, second time.

1120

Hon. Liz Sandals: We paid \$22.5 billion last year, and \$22.5 billion in funding is being flowed. The class size ratio within that funding model for secondary schools is 22 to 1. That has been the class size funding model as long as I have been involved as an MPP. In fact, with the exception of bigger classes during the NDP social contract, I think it has also been the class size generator as long as I was a trustee. Twenty-two to one is the long-standing class size generator for the funding model for secondary schools in the province of Ontario, and we have not requested any change to that.

MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: My question is to the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure.

As Ontarians are well aware, our manufacturing sector was hit hard by the global recession. Fortunately, to quote the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, "We've seen a rebirth in manufacturing." However, it's important that we continue to support—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'd appreciate if the member would not make comments while he's exiting.

Carry on.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I know that in our latest budget, our government has extended the accelerated deduction for investments in manufacturing and processing machinery. This important step will continue to encourage the growth of the sector. Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the minister, could he please inform this House on the future outlook of Ontario's manufacturing sector?

Hon. Brad Duguid: I'm pleased to say that I have some good news to report on Ontario's manufacturing sector. In the latest report from Stats Canada, Ontario's manufacturing sector gained 1,200 net new jobs. In the month before—in March—we gained another 800 new jobs. According to RBC's Canadian manufacturing index, confidence in Ontario's manufacturing sector continues to rise, from 54 to 55.5 in the last month. That's really good news, and that's despite all the efforts the opposition is making to talk down our gains in manufacturing.

Our province's confidence index is now well beyond the national average of 49.8. RBC is predicting that our province's manufacturing sector will continue to lead the country. This is good news for our sector and it's good news for our province. We'll continue to work with our manufacturing sector to keep it growing.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I'd like to thank the minister for that answer. It's good to hear that the steps our government has taken are having a positive impact on the sector and that the outlook for Ontario manufacturing is quite positive. Not only will the growing manufacturing sector create many direct jobs, it will create many indirect jobs as well.

While this is positive news for constituents in my riding, we know that there are still people in Ontario looking for work. Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the minister, could he please inform this House what further action our government has taken to encourage job growth in Ontario's manufacturing sector?

Hon. Brad Duguid: The recent budget that we brought in continues to support programs that continue to strengthen our economy and, in particular, our manufacturing sector. For instance, we're increasing the Jobs and Prosperity Fund by \$200 million, to \$2.7 billion. This will help Ontario to continue to secure large investments in our manufacturing sector—investments like Honda's expansion in Alliston, for example.

We're supporting the Southwestern and Eastern Ontario Development Funds. These funds have invested \$120 million, leveraging \$1.3 billion in private sector investment, creating or supporting 31,000 jobs—well over 90% of which are in the manufacturing sector.

We're extending the accelerated deduction for investments in manufacturing and processing; that will ensure another \$575 million in our manufacturing sector. We'll continue to work with this sector.

TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: My question today is for the Minister of Education. In 98 days, two million students in Ontario should be starting their new school year. Sadly, the two-tiered, disastrous bargaining system is halting almost all negotiations, including the class size debate, and we know you're promoting the guideline option.

Your dithering over the past eight months is now causing a real chance of turmoil in the next school year. Now all teacher federations in Ontario are on the brink of either all-out strikes or a major disruption, starting this fall.

Minister, are you prepared to assure Ontario parents that these disruptions and strikes will not occur come September 8?

Hon. Liz Sandals: What I can absolutely assure people of is that we will continue to bargain. There are three months left before the next school year. I continue to believe that the only way that we will solve the various problems is by negotiating a collective agreement. In fact, central negotiations do continue with various teachers' unions.

Welcome to Melinda Chartrand, the president of the French Catholic trustees, who's in the gallery this morning.

We continue to negotiate in partnership with the various school board associations and with various teacher federations. That will continue. I strongly believe that we will be able to reach agreements before the end of the summer.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Minister, I'm not sure if you actually understand how serious the situation is. With the non-bargaining that is taking place, we have no agreements with any of the 72 boards. With the non-bargaining, you have just a little over 13 weeks to resolve all of

the classroom teacher education issues that you expected Bill 122 to resolve.

We are likely going to hobble to the end of this school year, but parents of two million students across Ontario will be on pins and needles worrying about the beginning of the school year in September. Minister, by the beginning of August, if you have not made serious progress—and judging by the inaction over the past nine months, I expect you won't—are you prepared to bring the House back to take action in August?

Hon. Liz Sandals: That was fascinating, because what I think I just heard was a request for us to impose by legislation a collective agreement, and I absolutely reject that. We believe in negotiated collective agreements. We are—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Liz Sandals: As I have said repeatedly, we believe that the way to arrive at good collective agreements is to negotiate them. That's exactly what I will be doing over the next three months.

TVO DOCUMENTARY

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: My question is to the Premier. The Premier's office stopped independent journalists from showing footage that the Premier's office agreed to shoot. We hear this is because that footage might have shed some light into the Sudbury bribery scandal. Now someone in the Premier's office—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Please finish.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Someone in the Premier's office is keeping that footage secret. Maybe it's the Premier; maybe it's Pat Sorbara. Who in the Premier's office is keeping the documentary from seeing the light of day?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, as I've said in this House, we worked closely with the producer to determine the parameters of the film. I haven't seen any of the footage.

I still hope that the documentary can be played, because in the first instance it was about putting in place a documentary that would replace or augment a much earlier documentary that was made during the Davis era about how government works. That was the point of the documentary. That's why I agreed to it. I haven't seen any of the footage. I hope that it can go forward as an educational tool.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: The Premier did indeed welcome cameras into the back rooms, but then something was caught on film and the Premier's office went into lockdown. We've heard that maybe this has something to do with the Sudbury bribery scandal. We want to know, but, more importantly, the people of Ontario want to know: What was caught on tape that spooked the Premier's office so much that they're keeping—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Please finish.

1130

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: What was caught on tape that spooked the Premier's office so much that they're keeping this footage secret from the people of Ontario?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite makes my life and our lives sound very intriguing. But what happened was, we worked closely with the producer to established the parameters of the film, which was, as I said, to be a behind-the-scenes look at the preparation of the budget. Over the course of the filming, we had some concerns that the project was deviating from those original parameters. We shared those concerns with the producer. Our sole contact was the producer on the project; it wasn't TVO.

There was always a clear understanding that we would have no editorial control but that we would be allowed to review portions of the film with government lawyers for issues like breaches of cabinet confidentiality or privacy legislation. That review was supposed to happen.

As I said, we were ready to sign off on the final product. I hope that it can be seen, but I have not seen any of the footage.

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr. Glenn Thibeault: Mr. Speaker, my question this morning is for the Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

Just last week, the Ontario Mining Association hosted their seventh annual So You Think You Know Mining high school video awards. I'm pleased to say that several high schools from my great riding of Sudbury took home some of the awards.

I know that our Premier, along with the Minister of Northern Development and Mines and colleagues from all sides of this House, were present at this great event.

This is an event that gives students an opportunity to learn about Ontario's expertise in geology, engineering and our mining exploration and production industries.

When it comes to mining, Ontario has the advantages of a strong economy, competitive business costs and a world-class research and development environment.

Can the minister inform the House on the status of the mining industry in Ontario and its significance to our provincial economy?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I thank the member for Sudbury for the question.

It was wonderful to be joined by Premier Wynne and nine or 10 of our legislative colleagues at the Ontario Mining Association's seventh annual So You Think You Know Mining awards show, which is an extraordinary opportunity for high school students all across the province to put together award-winning videos about the mining industry. These are extraordinary videos that highlight the fact that there are currently 43 mines operating in the province of Ontario, including 14 base metal mines, 16 gold mines and one diamond mine. It was wonderful to be part of that—also, to highlight the fact that we have two new mines opening up in Ontario this year.

I was recently at the groundbreaking ceremony for the New Gold project near Fort Frances.

There are many exciting things happening in the mining sector of Ontario, and it's great to have them celebrated at that video awards show.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Glenn Thibeault: It is part of our government's plan to build Ontario up by creating a dynamic and supportive environment where business can prosper.

Ontario is a leader not only in the Canadian mining industry but also globally. There are hundreds of international companies in Ontario engaging in mineral exploration and hundreds more in the supplies and services sector who benefit from that investment—and the Minister of Northern Development and Mines has made it clear that our government is doing just that when it comes to the mining sector.

The global mining economy is evolving, and new competition is always emerging.

Mr. Speaker, I know our government is committed to ensuring that Ontario remains a world leader in mineral exploration and mining investment. Can the minister tell the House what our government is doing to maximize Ontario's potential and support a modern and innovative industry, ensuring that Ontario's mining sector continues to thrive for decades to come?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: The member is so right: It's incredibly important that the mining sector remains competitive. That's why we're so proud of making the Northern Industrial Electricity Rate Program a permanent program, which is a huge help to the major resource developers in northern Ontario.

And may I say, there are other very important incentive programs that have been put in place by the Minister of Energy; for example, the Industrial Electricity Incentive Program—not well known, the IEI Program. I know that the Minister of Energy and, may I say, the MPP for Sudbury were recently showcased the new Victoria Mine that's under development, the KGHM mine. We know, indeed, that Detour Gold, a huge gold mine in northern Ontario, has actually been able to have a six-year industrial electricity incentive contract, reducing their energy costs. Rubicon Minerals in Red Lake is a project that will be opening up, in commission, this year, and we're going to be there for the opening sometime later this summer. Another one—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

ÉDUCATION EN FRANÇAIS

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

M^{me} Gila Martow: Monsieur le Président, ma question s'adresse à la ministre de l'Éducation. Madame la Ministre, nous avons aujourd'hui avec nous à l'Assemblée législative plus de 100 élèves et parents de Hamilton. Leur école francophone possède des installations physiques qui sont tellement inférieures à la

norme que l'école a été déclarée « temporaire » il y a 15 ans.

De notre côté de l'Assemblée législative, nous croyons que les élèves francophones ont le droit de s'attendre à des écoles répondant aux mêmes normes de qualité que tous les autres élèves en Ontario. Madame la Ministre, pouvez-vous nous dire pourquoi ces familles ont attendu 15 ans pour une nouvelle école?

Hon. Liz Sandals: Thank you very much, and welcome to the students. I think the students that are here are French Catholic students from Hamilton, so welcome to the House today.

Certainly we have had a high priority in making sure that we fund francophone education in Ontario. It might interest you to know that the funding for French-language education has increased by almost 80% since we took office. If you compare that to the overall funding for education, which has increased 56% since we took office, obviously we have been making significant investments in our French-language system.

In particular, when it comes to new schools, we've spent \$1.3 billion building 79 new French schools—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Supplementary?

M^{me} Gila Martow: Encore à la ministre : plus tard aujourd'hui, je déposerai plus de 2 500 pétitions de résidents des régions de Brantford, Brant-Haldimand, Simcoe, Norfolk et Hamilton-Wentworth demandant une nouvelle école. Madame la Ministre, que dites-vous à ces étudiants qui veulent une nouvelle école?

Hon. Liz Sandals: Well, the process for applying for a grant for a new school is that you have to make a good business case, and unfortunately, in this particular case, the business case was not a strong business case. What we have done, however, is we have offered \$25.9 million to build a joint French school for both public and Catholic students in Hamilton. That would be a grade 7 to 12 school. The French public board has accepted the offer; the French Catholic board has not. However, our offer remains on the table that we would love to build a new joint French-language school for public and Catholic.

We have models all over the province where we have French boards working together, English boards working together, French and English boards working together. We know this model works.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Transportation on a point of order.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Thanks very much, Speaker. We're joined today in the galleries by some individuals who are here in anticipation of the vote coming up on Bill 31. If I could introduce Rick Donaldson from the Ontario School Bus Association; Scott Watson from Parachute Canada; and Angelo DiCicco from Young Drivers of Canada and his colleague Jim Kilpatrick.

We also have some student representatives from Arrive Alive: Melissa Montanari, Natalie Di Felice and

Tori Peacock; Brian Patterson from the Ontario Safety League; and the ADM from MTO's road user safety division, Heidi Francis.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Etobicoke Centre on a point of order.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Mr. Speaker, we have a guest here today. I just want to introduce Madi Fuller, who I met last week at an event honouring 25 years of public service for Mr. Glen Murray. Welcome to Queen's Park.

DEFERRED VOTES

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We have a deferred vote on the amendment to the motion to apply a time table to certain business of the House.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1140 to 1145.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On May 27, Mr. Naqvi moved government notice of motion number 40. On May 28, Mr. Clark then moved that the motion be amended as follows:

That in each of the sections (a), (b), (c) and (d), bullet number two be struck out and replaced with the following:

“—That the deadline for requests to appear be 2 p.m. on the Thursday of the week that the bill receives second reading?”—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Agreed.

All those in favour of the amendment to the motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Gravelle, Michael	Miller, Paul
Anderson, Granville	Gretzky, Lisa	Moridi, Reza
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Hardeman, Ernie	Munro, Julia
Arnott, Ted	Harris, Michael	Murray, Glen R.
Bailey, Robert	Hatfield, Percy	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Baker, Yvan	Hillier, Randy	Naqvi, Yasir
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoggarth, Ann	Natyshak, Taras
Ballard, Chris	Horwath, Andrea	Nicholls, Rick
Barrett, Toby	Hoskins, Eric	Orazietti, David
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hudak, Tim	Pettapiece, Randy
Bisson, Gilles	Hunter, Mitzie	Potts, Arthur
Bradley, James J.	Jaczek, Helena	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chan, Michael	Jones, Sylvia	Rinaldi, Lou
Chiarelli, Bob	Kiwala, Sophie	Sandals, Liz
Clark, Steve	Lalonde, Marie-France	Scott, Laurie
Colle, Mike	Leal, Jeff	Sergio, Mario
Coteau, Michael	MacCharles, Tracy	Singh, Jagmeet
Crack, Grant	MacLaren, Jack	Smith, Todd
Damerla, Dipika	Malhi, Harinder	Tabuns, Peter
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Takhar, Harinder S.
Delaney, Bob	Mantha, Michael	Taylor, Monique
Dhillon, Vic	Martins, Cristina	Thibault, Glenn
Dickson, Joe	Martow, Gila	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dong, Han	Matthews, Deborah	Vanthof, John
Duguid, Brad	Mauro, Bill	Vernie, Daiene
Fedeli, Victor	McDonell, Jim	Walker, Bill
Fife, Catherine	McGarry, Kathryn	Wilson, Jim
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMahon, Eleanor	Wong, Soo
Forster, Cindy	McNaughton, Monte	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fraser, John	Meillere, Madeleine	Yurek, Jeff
French, Jennifer K.	Milczyn, Peter Z.	Zimmer, David
Gates, Wayne	Miller, Norm	

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 95; the nays are 0.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I declare the motion carried.

Are the members ready to vote on the main motion, as amended? Agreed? I heard a no.

This item will remain on the Orders and Notices paper.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: For the record, Speaker, we did not say no.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Given the circumstances, I will test the House again: Are the members ready to vote on the main motion, as amended? Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. Naqvi has moved notice of motion number 40. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion, as amended, carry? Carried.

Mr. Steve Clark: On division.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Carried, on division.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

TRANSPORTATION STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT (MAKING
ONTARIO'S ROADS SAFER), 2015
LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN CE QUI CONCERNE
LE TRANSPORT (ACCROÎTRE LA
SÉCURITÉ ROUTIÈRE EN ONTARIO)

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 31, An Act to amend the Highway 407 East Act, 2012 and the Highway Traffic Act in respect of various matters and to make a consequential amendment to the Provincial Offences Act / Projet de loi 31, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2012 sur l'autoroute 407 Est et le Code de la route en ce qui concerne diverses questions et apportant une modification corrélative à la Loi sur les infractions provinciales.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1150 to 1151.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On April 20, 2015, Ms. Sandals moved third reading of Bill 31.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes
Albanese, Laura
Anderson, Granville
Armstrong, Teresa J.
Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Baker, Yvan
Balkissoon, Bas
Ballard, Chris
Barrett, Toby
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Bisson, Gilles
Gravelle, Michael
Gretzky, Lisa
Hardeman, Ernie
Harris, Michael
Hatfield, Percy
Hillier, Randy
Hoggarth, Ann
Howath, Andrea
Hoskins, Eric
Hudak, Tim
Hunter, Mitzie

Bradley, James J.
Chan, Michael
Chiarelli, Bob
Clark, Steve
Collie, Mike
Coteau, Michael
Crack, Grant
Damerla, Dipika
Del Duca, Steven
Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe
Dong, Han
Duguid, Brad
Fedeli, Victor
Fife, Catherine
Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Forster, Cindy
Fraser, John
French, Jennifer K.
Gates, Wayne
Miller, Paul
Moriadi, Reza
Munro, Julia
Murray, Glen R.
Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Naqvi, Yasir
Natyshak, Taras
Nicholls, Rick
Oraziotti, David
Pettapiece, Randy
Potts, Arthur

Jaczek, Helena
Jones, Sylvia
Kiwala, Sophie
Lalonde, Marie-France
Leal, Jeff
MacCharles, Tracy
MacLaren, Jack
Malhi, Harinder
Mangat, Amrit
Mantha, Michael
Martins, Cristina
Marlow, Gila
Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill
McDonell, Jim
McGarry, Kathryn
McMahon, Eleanor
McNaughton, Monte
Meilleur, Madeleine
Milczyn, Peter Z.
Miller, Norm
Qaadri, Shafiq
Rinaldi, Lou
Sandals, Liz
Scott, Laurie
Sergio, Mario
Singh, Jagmeet
Smith, Todd
Tabuns, Peter
Takhar, Harinder S.
Taylor, Monique
Thibeault, Glenn
Thompson, Lisa M.
Vanthof, Glenn
Vernile, Daiene
Walker, Bill
Wilson, Jim
Wong, Soo
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Yurek, Jeff
Zimmer, David

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 95; the nays are 0.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): There are no further deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1154 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I'm honoured to recognize, in the east gallery, the Honourable Pierre Arcand, the member of Quebec's National Assembly for the riding of Mont-Royal. Monsieur Arcand serves in cabinet as Quebec's Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and as Minister responsible for the Plan Nord.

For the past 18 months, as we know, Quebec and Ontario have been working together very closely on important strategic regional and national issues, including climate change, electricity trade and energy policy. This was highlighted in the last several weeks with the presence of Monsieur Couillard in the assembly here.

We're pleased that he's able to join us today for an important meeting, and I'd like him to stand and be acknowledged.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We welcome our guest.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I am happy to welcome my family: Scott Jonassen, and our daughter, Paisley.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): A personal "welcome back" to the member from Kenora-Rainy River. Also, keep the baby away from all the adults in this House—except the parents, of course.

Mr. Chris Ballard: I'd like to welcome, in the east gallery, a good friend of mine and a resident of Newmarket-Aurora, Anthony Pullano. Welcome.

ANNUAL REPORT, INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table the 2014-15 annual report from the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

VICTIMS' SERVICES OF LAMBTON-KENT-MIDDLESEX

Mr. Monte McNaughton: I want to take this opportunity to recognize the tremendous work being done by Victim Services of Middlesex County, Chatham-Kent Victim Services and Victim Services of Sarnia-Lambton.

The vital work of these organizations is made possible by a few staff and the dedication of hundreds of volunteers, who provide support and crisis assistance to victims of crime and tragic circumstances.

This work demands not only the time of these volunteers, who are on call 24/7, but also takes a real emotional toll. I don't think we can thank them enough for the sacrifices they make for the sake of victims and people in crisis, which is why I also want to take this opportunity to raise my concerns over the restructuring of funding that has taken place, without consultation, which is seriously impacting the delivery of victim services in my riding and across rural Ontario.

These cuts forced Victim Services of Middlesex County to relocate their office over 40 kilometres away, out of the community of Strathroy to the outskirts of London, and will prevent volunteers from receiving the training they need to respond to situations involving domestic abuse, assaults and homicide.

I urge the government to be aware of the consequences of their decisions and the ramifications for our province's most vulnerable people.

LABOUR DISPUTES

Ms. Cindy Forster: I rise today to highlight the plight of the workers and their families across our province who have been forced to resort to severe job action as a result of this Liberal government's neglect.

In my own riding, nurses and support workers—members of OPSEU 294—have been on the picket line now for two months as a result of their employer, CarePartners, a for-profit, putting profit ahead of patient care.

On Saturday talks reached an impasse—the first day negotiating in almost two months. The negotiator for the CCAC said the CCAC is “ecstatic with the non-unionized work that CarePartners is now providing”—an insult to workers and an indictment to the very patients who continue to suffer from delays, wait-lists and impacts the strike has had on them and their families.

Crown Metal Packaging workers have been on strike for 21 months. The foreign company refuses to negotiate a fair settlement and has hired replacement scab workers to prolong the dispute and attempt to break the strike. An industrial inquiry was announced months ago, without any details of its progress, deadline or mandate.

I stand in solidarity with these workers and their families today and call on the government to take immediate action and to stop letting corporate greed come before our province's workers and their hard-working families.

ITALIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. Chris Ballard: I rise today representing the fine riding of Newmarket-Aurora to recognize June as Italian Heritage Month in Ontario. June was proclaimed Italian Heritage Month in 2010. Today, in fact, marks 69 years since Italy became a republic.

Italians began arriving in Ontario in the late 1800s. Italian newcomers settled all across Ontario, anywhere they could find a job. They proved themselves in factories; as farmers, miners, lumberjacks; in construction and in business.

In my hometown of King City, Italian Canadians began arriving in the 1970s. It was a great time for our little community. Our new neighbours brought with them a passion for community that enriched and made our town better. Today there are more than 900,000 Italian Canadians living in Ontario. They form the largest Italian Canadian population in Canada.

During this month, we celebrate the achievements of a number of well-known Italians. I'd like to recognize a great Italian Canadian from Newmarket-Aurora, Anthony Pullano. Anthony was born in the Calabria region and immigrated to Canada with his family in the early 1950s. Anthony has achieved success as a painter and as a businessman in Aurora. He has created many great pieces of artwork. His most recent accomplishment is the illustration used in this year's Italian Heritage Month poster. Congratulations, Anthony.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Ontarians to make the most of Italian Heritage Month by attending heritage events and immersing themselves in this wonderful culture. Grazie a tutti.

ONTARIO CRAFT CIDER

Ms. Sylvia Jones: It is a pleasure to rise today and remind everyone that this week, we are marking Ontario Cider Week here in the province of Ontario and, of course, today at Queen's Park, Ontario craft cider awareness day.

The great news about cider is it is one of the fastest-growing categories of beverages sold in the LCBO. The challenge, however, is that 80% of all cider sold in the LCBO is imported. It doesn't have to be thus. Ontario cider producers play a vital role to our local communities across the province by using 100% Ontario-grown apples and pears to produce their cider and perry.

As legislators, I believe we can do more to support Ontario cider producers. That is why later today, I, along with Arthur Potts—I'm sorry I can't remember—

Mr. Arthur Potts: Beaches—East York.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Beaches—East York—will be tabling a private member's bill that is entitled Growing Ontario's Craft Cider Industry Act, which will ensure Ontario cider receives the same incentives Ontario craft beer currently receives.

Ontario cider producers deserve that same opportunity. With our support, we can encourage this home-grown industry. I hope we can all agree and support our PMB later on.

ANNIVERSARY OF ATTACK ON THE GOLDEN TEMPLE

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Today I rise on the 31st anniversary of the Indian military invasion of the Golden Temple, also known as Operation Blue Star.

The invasion began on June 1 and continued on to June 10, and is one of the most senseless, brutal massacres in the history of India. In fact, G.K.C. Reddy, a famous politician and journalist, refers to this attack as one of the worst examples of the organized killing of innocents by the organized military might of a nation.

In addition to this horrible loss of life, the government made matters worse when, after completing their invasion, after completing their massacre, they set fire to the Sikh Reference Library, destroying thousands of original, priceless manuscripts.

This was an attack not on a group of people, but the heart of a nation. In fact, as Mark Tully and Satish Jacob write on the subject, "Any army which wants to destroy a nation destroys its culture. That is why the Indian army burnt the library."

1510

In addition to this horrible massacre, humanitarian aid was denied to the victims of this state violence, and 22 children ranging from ages 2 to 16 were rounded up and arrested, deemed dangerous terrorists. It took a petition to the supreme court to release them. A judge finally ruled that it was senseless to keep them in custody.

The destruction of the Sikh Reference Library, the denial of humanitarian aid and the state violence with respect to the children all point to a deeper, insidious purpose of this violation, which was to destroy the Sikh nation.

I stand with friends and families asking for and demanding justice for those who have lost their lives.

VIOLENCE AGAINST ABORIGINAL WOMEN

Mr. Glenn Thibeault: I rise today on the historical territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit and on the day the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's summary report is released.

So it's fitting that the bells at the Anglican Church of the Epiphany in my riding of Sudbury have been ringing

since yesterday. The bells are ringing in honour of missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls in Canada.

The church, located in the downtown core of Sudbury, will ring a bell every hour between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday to Saturday, until June 20. In all, the bells will be pealed 1,122 times, one time for each of the missing or murdered aboriginal women and girls. The bell-ringing is being carried out to express solidarity with Canada's aboriginal peoples in their pursuit of justice and their demand for an official inquiry on missing and murdered women and girls.

Members of the Church of the Epiphany, as well as members of other local churches, have been recruited to serve as bell-ringers over the three weeks, but there is room for the community at large to participate. The church is asking anyone who would like to volunteer to call the church. Organizers say there is room for 100 Sudburians to participate.

This is something that affects the whole community—the whole country. For it is only when our voices ring out as loud as these bells that our call for justice will be heard, and only when our call for justice is heard will there truly be truth and reconciliation.

ALMONTE GENERAL HOSPITAL

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Almonte hospital, in my riding, has had to lay off nurses. This government has frozen the funding for the Almonte hospital for four years. The Almonte hospital is well managed, and for the first three years was able to find enough efficiencies to balance their budget without laying off any staff, while still maintaining the high level of health care that the community of Almonte has been used to receiving.

But this year, that changed. There are no more efficiencies to be found. This year, Almonte hospital management worked with leaders from CUPE on a sad task: the task of laying off nine registered practical nurses and replacing them with nine personal support workers, with the objective of reducing operating costs.

On May 23, Linda Melbrew, a worker at Almonte hospital and president of CUPE Local 3022, came to my office with 550 postcards signed by residents of Almonte protesting the funding freeze at their hospital. I hand-delivered those 550 postcards to the Minister of Health this morning.

The Almonte hospital needs and deserves a funding increase. The government has a responsibility to deliver the necessary funding. It is time for the government to do their job.

CANADIAN WOMEN FOR WOMEN IN AFGHANISTAN

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I rise today to tell you about an organization that I am a member of, Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan, whose primary goal is to provide educational opportunities for Afghan women and girls. In 2001, 700,000 students were enrolled in school, almost none of them girls. Today, more than 10 million

go to schools, with girls making up 40% in the primary grades.

CW4WA builds school libraries and science labs. They train teachers and provide them with lesson plans, textbooks and visual aids. They pay teachers' salaries, rent for schools, provide wells and school bags, and have 350 projects across eight provinces.

I'd like to recognize a few CW4WA champions: author and founder Deborah Ellis, who donates all proceeds from two books she's written about Afghan women, \$850,000 to date; Kingston's own Madeliene Tarasick and Marg Stewart lead a group of wonderfully dedicated community volunteers, most of them present or retired teachers, who work tirelessly raising awareness and money for this noble cause.

No one understands the significance of our support more than fellow CW4WA member Reine Dawe and her husband, retired Lieutenant Colonel Peter Dawe, whose son Captain Matthew Dawe tragically paid the ultimate price while serving the goals of freedom and democracy in that very place.

Mr. Speaker, there's a strong link between education and peace-building, and I'm very proud that this courageous charity continues to further tolerance and empower women.

IRONDAMES

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I rise in the House today to recognize the IRONDames, an amazing group of dedicated women making a difference for those living with cancer and their families in my riding of Burlington. The IRONDames were founded by the inspirational Kimberly Anne Kearns Pace, a renowned children's speech pathologist. Among her many talents and accomplishments, Kim improved the lives of thousands of children and families with a wide variety of developmental needs before she lost a courageous four-year battle with cancer. To this day, her legacy lives on through the IRONDames.

On Mother's Day, May 21, with Mother Nature on their side, the IRONDames inspired 229 moms to line up at the start line at the sixth annual Lace Up for Love walk/run. Together, family and friends, along with the IRONDames, raised an incredible \$43,000 towards the cancer exercise program at Wellspring Birmingham Gilgan House, a facility in the Halton and Peel region offering a wide range of cancer support programs and services to meet the emotional, social, psychological and informational needs of people living with cancer and those who care for them.

Recently nominated for a Burlington's Best Award in the category of community service, the IRONDames are a truly remarkable group of women triathletes making a difference in our community.

I'd like to congratulate them and all of the walkers, runners, volunteers and sponsors who helped make the sixth annual Lace Up for Love walk/run such a huge success.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I thank all members for their statements.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated June 2, 2015, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. Pursuant to standing order 108(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

Report deemed adopted.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a report on Infrastructure Ontario—Alternative Financing and Procurement, Section 3.05 of the 2014 Annual Report of the Auditor General of Ontario, from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Hardeman presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations.

Does the member wish to make a short statement?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: As Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, I'm pleased to table the committee's report, entitled Infrastructure Ontario—Alternative Financing and Procurement, Section 3.05 of the 2014 Annual Report of the Auditor General of Ontario.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the permanent membership of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts: Lisa MacLeod, vice-chair; Han Dong; John Fraser; Percy Hatfield; Harinder Malhi; Julia Munro; Arthur Potts; and Lou Rinaldi.

The committee extends its appreciation to officials from the Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure and Infrastructure Ontario for their attendance at the hearings.

The committee also acknowledges the assistance provided during the hearings and report-writing deliberations by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario and the Clerk of the Committee and staff in legislative research.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of the debate.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Hardeman moves adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Debate adjourned.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a report on Financial Services Commission of Ontario—Pension Plan and Financial Service Regulatory

Oversight, Section 3.03 of the 2014 Annual Report of the Auditor General of Ontario, from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Hardeman presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations.

Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: As Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, I'm pleased to table the committee's report today, entitled Financial Services Commission of Ontario–Pension Plan and Financial Service Regulatory Oversight, section 3.03 of the 2014 Annual Report of the Auditor General of Ontario.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the permanent membership of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts: Lisa MacLeod, Han Dong, John Fraser, Percy Hatfield, Harinder Malhi, Julia Munro, Arthur Potts and Lou Rinaldi.

1520

The committee extends its appreciation to the officials of the Financial Services Commission of Ontario for their attendance at the hearings.

The committee also acknowledges the assistance provided during the hearings and report-writing deliberations by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, the Clerk of the Committee and staff in legislative research.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of the debate.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Debate adjourned.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL POLICY

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Social Policy and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum): Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 27, An Act to require a provincial framework and action plan concerning vector-borne and zoonotic diseases / *Projet de loi 27, Loi exigeant un cadre et un plan d'action provinciaux concernant les maladies zoonotiques et à transmission vectorielle,*

The title of which is amended to read:

Bill 27, An Act to require a provincial framework and action plan concerning vector-borne diseases / *Projet de loi 27, Loi exigeant un cadre et un plan d'action provinciaux concernant les maladies à transmission vectorielle.*

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Carried.

Report adopted.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Grant Crack: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on General Government and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum): Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015 / *Projet de loi 6, Loi édictant la Loi de 2015 sur l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la prospérité.*

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Carried.

Report adopted.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 12, 2015, the bill is ordered for third reading.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

GROWING ONTARIO'S CRAFT CIDER INDUSTRY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA CROISSANCE DE L'INDUSTRIE DU CIDRE ARTISANAL DE L'ONTARIO

Ms. Jones moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 110, An Act to amend the Liquor Control Act / *Projet de loi 110, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les alcools.*

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for a short statement.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you, Speaker. We have decided, along with my colleague, the member from Beaches–East York, to title our bill Growing Ontario's Craft Cider Industry Act. If anyone was here during my statement, it talked about the need and the abilities that we have as legislators to encourage this burgeoning industry. Essentially, it allows what is currently in place for craft beer to be put in place for craft cider.

ENDING PREDATORY ELECTRICITY RETAILING ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR L'ÉLIMINATION DES PRIX ABUSIFS DANS LA VENTE AU DÉTAIL D'ÉLECTRICITÉ

Ms. Campbell moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 111, An Act to amend the Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010 to eliminate fixed rate electricity contracts between retailers and consumers / *Projet de loi 111, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2010 sur la protection des*

consommateurs d'énergie pour éliminer les contrats de fourniture d'électricité à tarif fixe entre détaillants et consommateurs.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for a short statement.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Currently, under the Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010, contracts between retailers and consumers for the provision of electricity at a fixed rate are permitted.

The bill adds part 2.1 to the act. It provides that contracts between retailers and consumers for the provision of electricity at a fixed rate that are entered into after a specified day are deemed to be void. It also provides that existing contracts between retailers and consumers for the provision of electricity at a fixed rate that are renewed, extended or amended after a specified day are deemed to be void on the day the existing contract expires, except if amended to provide for the cancellation of the contract without penalty.

Part 2.1 further provides various protections to consumers who enter into contracts that are deemed to be void under the new part. Such protections include the right to refund the money paid under a void contract and freedom from liability for obligations under such a contract.

STRENGTHENING CONSUMER PROTECTION AND ELECTRICITY SYSTEM OVERSIGHT ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 POUR RENFORCER LA PROTECTION DES CONSOMMATEURS ET LA SURVEILLANCE DU RÉSEAU D'ÉLECTRICITÉ

Mr. Chiarelli moved first reading of the following bill:
Bill 112, An Act to amend the Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010 and the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998 / Projet de loi 112, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2010 sur la protection des consommateurs d'énergie et la Loi de 1998 sur la Commission de l'énergie de l'Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for a short statement.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: This legislation would further strengthen the Ontario Energy Board to ensure that ratepayers are further protected. Our government's new bill would, if passed, ban transactions of electricity retailers at the doors, increase the ability of the OEB to fine utilities for non-compliant behaviours, provide cabinet with increased ability to designate priority transmission corridors and, among other steps, provide the OEB with increased customer advocacy responsibilities. Our government is committed to protecting ratepayers through

robust and effective regulation of electricity rates via the Ontario Energy Board.

MOTIONS

RAINBOW FLAG

Hon. James J. Bradley: On behalf of the House leaders of the government, the Progressive Conservative Party and the New Democratic Party, I will be putting forward the following motion. I believe that you will find we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice respecting the flying of the rainbow flag.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The deputy House leader is looking for unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Deputy House leader.

Hon. James J. Bradley: I move that the rainbow flag be flown on the Legislature's courtesy flagpole during Pride Week, from June 22 to June 28, 2015, subject to being temporarily interrupted for any other flag-raising that would normally occur during this period; and

That the Legislative Assembly's flag standards and protocol policy with respect to the use of the courtesy flagpole be amended to include the rainbow flag; and

That, going forward, requests to fly the rainbow flag shall be handled in the same manner as other recognized flag-raising requests.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader moves that the rainbow flag be flown on the Legislature's courtesy flagpole during Pride Week, from June 22 to June 28, 2015, subject to being temporarily interrupted for any other flag-raising—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Dispense.

Do we agree? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

PAN AM GAMES FLAGS

Hon. James J. Bradley: Again, on behalf of the House leaders of the three parties, I believe that you will have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice respecting the flying of the Pan American Sports Organization flag and the Americas Paralympic Committee flag.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The deputy House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Hon. James J. Bradley: I move that the Pan American Sports Organization flag be flown on the Legislature's courtesy flagpole from July 9 to July 26, 2015, for the Pan American Games; and

That the Americas Paralympic Committee flag be flown on the Legislature's courtesy flagpole from August 7 to August 15, 2015, for the Parapan Am Games; and

That both flags are subject to being temporarily interrupted for any other flag-raising that would normally occur during this period.

1530

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Bradley moves that the Pan American Sports Organization flag be flown on the Legislature's—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Dispense. Do we agree? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 16

Hon. James J. Bradley: Seeing how well the House leaders of the three parties are getting along these days, I have a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding Bill 16, An Act to proclaim Christmas Tree Day.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The deputy House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Hon. James J. Bradley: I move that the orders for second and third reading of Bill 16 be immediately called and that the question be put on the motion for second and third reading without debate or amendment.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Do we have unanimous consent to put forward the orders for second and third reading of Bill 16? Do we agree? Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

CHRISTMAS TREE DAY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LE JOUR DE L'ARBRE DE NOËL

Mr. Wilson moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 16, An Act to proclaim Christmas Tree Day /
Projet de loi 16, Loi proclamant le Jour de l'arbre de Noël.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

CHRISTMAS TREE DAY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LE JOUR DE L'ARBRE DE NOËL

Mr. Wilson moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 16, An Act to proclaim Christmas Tree Day /
Projet de loi 16, Loi proclamant le Jour de l'arbre de Noël.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Wilson has moved third reading. Do we agree? Agreed.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass as entitled in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Congratulations.

PETITIONS

CURLING

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's curling clubs are experiencing significant spikes in hydro costs due in large part to the so-called 'global adjustment'; and

"Whereas Ontario's curling clubs have already been forced to raise rates and reduce services to their members; and

"Whereas if those costs continue to rise, it could affect their ability to provide curling services to current or future members; and

"Whereas there are over 200 curling facilities in Ontario used by approximately 50,000 curlers; and

"Whereas up to 100 curling clubs are already at risk of closing due to the high cost of hydro; and

"Whereas community building—multi-generations can play together or against each other, curlers come from a wide variety of backgrounds: professionals, business owners, tradespeople, teachers, students, retirees; and

"Whereas great exercise for all ages and ability, an affordable sport with many different levels of competition from little rocks, juniors, adults, seniors and even at the Olympics;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately develop new policies to address the inequities of the class allocation system for global adjustment charges that are impacting the existence of curling clubs and other non-profit associations across Ontario."

I agree with this petition. I will sign it and give it to page Kerry.

INSTALLATIONS SCOLAIRES

M. Taras Natyshak: J'ai le plaisir d'introduire une véritable montagne de pétitions aujourd'hui à l'Assemblée au nom de ma collègue M^{me} Monique Taylor, la députée de Hamilton Mountain. La pétition lit :

« À l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

« Attendu que le ministère de l'Éducation de l'Ontario accorde du financement à d'autres conseils scolaires de la région de Hamilton pour la construction de nouvelles écoles sans avoir besoin de partager leur établissement avec d'autres partenaires;

« Attendu que le ministère de l'Éducation devrait accorder les mêmes droits aux élèves Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud que ceux accordés à la majorité;

« Attendu que les effectifs de la famille d'écoles de l'ÉS catholique Mère-Teresa justifient la construction

d'une école secondaire catholique de langue française à part entière;

« Nous, soussignés, membres de la communauté catholique francophone du Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud, adressons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario la pétition suivante :

« Que le projet de construction d'une nouvelle école secondaire catholique de langue française sur son propre terrain à Hamilton puisse se réaliser sans avoir à le faire en partenariat avec un autre conseil scolaire;

« Que le ministère de l'Éducation accorde le plein financement au Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud afin qu'il puisse construire une école équivalente à celle de la majorité à Hamilton. »

J'appuie cette pétition. Je vous remercie, monsieur le Président.

LUNG HEALTH

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I have a petition that was given to me by Susan Tremblett over the weekend. I mentioned her as the organizer of RunaLung yesterday in my member's statement.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas lung disease affects more than 2.4 million people in the province of Ontario, more than 570,000 of whom are children. Of the four chronic diseases responsible for 79% of deaths (cancers, cardiovascular diseases, lung disease and diabetes) lung disease is the only one without a dedicated province-wide strategy;

"In the Ontario Lung Association report, *Your Lungs, Your Life*, it is estimated that lung disease currently costs the Ontario taxpayers more than \$4 billion a year in direct and indirect health care costs, and this figure is estimated to rise to more than \$80 billion seven short years from now;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To allow for deputations on MPP Kathryn McGarry's private member's bill, Bill 41, the Lung Health Act, 2014, which establishes a Lung Health Advisory Council to make recommendations to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care on lung health issues and requires the minister to develop and implement an Ontario Lung Health Action Plan with respect to research, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of lung disease; and

"Once debated at committee, to expedite Bill 41, the Lung Health Act, 2014, through the committee stage and back to the Legislature for third and final reading; and to immediately call for a vote on Bill 41 and to seek royal assent immediately upon its passage."

I couldn't agree more. I affix my signature and give it to Jessica.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

Mr. Norm Miller: I have a petition in support of Bill 58, the Utility Task and All-Terrain Vehicles Act, and it reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas it has been over a decade since regulation 316/03 of the Highway Traffic Act has been updated to recognize new classes of off-road vehicles and a motion to do so passed on November 7, 2013, with unanimous support of the provincial Legislature;

"Whereas owners of two-up ATVs and side-by-side UTVs deserve clarity in knowing which roadways and trails are legal for use of these off-road vehicles; and

"Whereas owners should be able to legally use their vehicles to access woodlots, trails and hunting and fishing destinations;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That private member's Bill 58, which seeks to update the Highway Traffic Act to include new classes of all-terrain and utility task vehicles, receive swift passage through the Legislature."

Mr. Speaker, I support this.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Earlier today I hand-delivered 37 postcards and letters to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry signed by 22 residents of Ontario. I have a petition and, with the support of the members from Windsor West and the riding of Essex, 4,000 people have signed this. It reads:

"Protect Ojibway Prairie

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ojibway Prairie Complex is a five-park system totalling 332 hectares. It represents half of the city of Windsor's remaining natural areas;

"Whereas Ojibway has 160 species at risk—over 20% and 32% for Ontario and Canada's species at risk respectively. It represents Canada's, and the world's, most endangered ecosystem;

"Whereas over 4,000 species live on the site—over 700 plant types (100 are rare, 70 are in the reserve), over 3,000 insects, 233 bird species with breeding evidence for 71 species, and 16 mammals;

"Whereas Ojibway Park and the Ojibway Prairie Provincial Nature Reserve (OPPNR) are two of the parks in the complex adjacent to the proposed development. These parks are: (1) designated as natural heritage, environmentally significant areas, and in the case of the OPPNR, a provincially significant wetland (PSW) and an area of natural and scientific interest (ANSI); (2) protect biodiversity by hosting: eight endangered and 12 threatened species in Canada;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To designate this land with provincial importance and prevent any development on or adjacent to this land, so that the land will be protected and so too will the 91 species at risk, including six endangered and 12 threatened species on schedule 1 of the Endangered Species Act."

I fully agree with this. I will affix my name and give it to Ram to bring up to the desk.

1540

WATER FLUORIDATION

Mr. Grant Crack: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario: "Fluoridate All Ontario Drinking Water." This is from my riding.

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second-most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, a concentration providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentration to protect against adverse health effects; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

I support this petition, I will affix my signature and give it to page Katie.

HOSPICE FUNDING

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further petitions? The member from Simcoe—Grey.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Thank you, best Speaker in the world.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there is a discrepancy between how hospices are funded in Ontario; and

"Whereas Matthews House Hospice is the lowest-funded hospice in the Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) and among the lowest-funded in the province, even though it serves as many clients or more than other hospices that receive greater provincial support; and

"Whereas Matthews House has been told by the Central LHIN that LHINs do not fund residential hospice operational costs and yet hospices in other LHINs,

including Barrie, Huntsville, Richmond Hill, Owen Sound and now Collingwood, all receive operational funding from the province; and

"Whereas in February 2010 Matthews House Hospice was promised a solution to its underfunding by the Central LHIN which has never materialized;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Wynne government immediately develop a comprehensive strategy to deal with hospice funding to ensure that people in south Simcoe and all Ontarians receive equal access to end-of-life care."

I agree with the petition, and I will sign it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I thank the outstanding member from Simcoe—Grey.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I have a petition here that's been signed by hundreds of members from my riding.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas government cuts have a direct impact on patient care and front-line workers;

"Whereas hospital base operating budgets have been frozen for four years in a row and hospital global funding increases have been set below the rate of inflation since 2008, meaning that hospital budgets have been cut in real dollar terms ... for eight years in a row;

"Whereas Ontario government funding figures show that home care funding per client is less today than it was in 2002;

"Whereas Ontario hospital funding is the lowest in Canada;

"Whereas Ontario ranks eighth out of 10 provinces in hospital funding as a percentage of provincial GDP; and

"Whereas the government has actually refused to acknowledge that service cuts are happening;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately stop cuts and freezes to hospital budgets;

"To immediately cease the laying off of nurses and other front-line workers; and

"To fund hospitals adequately to ensure highest quality patient care across the province."

I wholeheartedly support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Ram to deliver to the table.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I thank the member from Kenora—Rainy River—the new mother. Welcome.

Further petitions?

CREDIT UNIONS

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I have a petition here that's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and reads as follows:

"Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario support our 1.3 million members across Ontario through loans to small

businesses to start up, grow and create jobs, help families to buy homes and assist their communities with charitable investments and volunteering; and

"Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario want a level playing field so they can provide the same service to our members as other financial institutions and promote economic growth without relying on taxpayers' resources;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Support the strength and growth of credit unions to support the strength and growth of Ontario's economy and create jobs in three ways:

"—maintain current credit union provincial tax rates;

"—show confidence in Ontario credit unions by increasing credit union-funded deposit insurance limits to a minimum of \$250,000;

"—allow credit unions to diversify by allowing Ontario credit unions to own 100% of subsidiaries."

I couldn't agree more with this petition. I'm going to affix my name to it, and I'll send it to the table with page Sheila.

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY OFFICE

Mr. Jeff Yurek: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Family Responsibility Office (FRO) is outdated, ineffective and the provincial government needs to conduct a review of the entire system;

"Whereas many families are either paying too much in child support or receiving too little, due to the ineffectiveness of the system;

"Whereas families are forced to become their own caseworkers to investigate information that is required by the Family Responsibility Office before they can enforce action;

"Whereas many of the federal and provincial databases do not link up, causing misinformation which affects the money paid or owed in child support for many families;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We call on the provincial government to strike an all-party supported select committee to conduct a review of the practices of the Family Responsibility Office to improve and streamline the collection of child support in the province of Ontario."

I support this petition and affix my signature.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: To the Legislative Assembly:

"Privatizing Hydro One: Another wrong choice.

"Whereas once you privatize hydro, there's no return; and

"We'll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

"We'll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

"We'll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what's happened elsewhere;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come."

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The time for petitions has now expired.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Point of order, Mr. Bradley.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Mr. Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent that notwithstanding standing order 79(b), the order for third reading of Bill 27, An Act to require a provincial framework and action plan concerning vector-borne diseases may be called today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Mr. Bradley has asked for unanimous consent. Is it the pleasure of the House? Carried.

PROVINCIAL FRAMEWORK AND ACTION PLAN CONCERNING EMERGING VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LE CADRE ET LE PLAN D'ACTION PROVINCIAUX CONCERNANT LES MALADIES À TRANSMISSION VECTORIELLE ÉMERGENTES

Mr. Barrett moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 27, An Act to require a provincial framework and action plan concerning vector-borne diseases / *Projet de loi 27, Loi exigeant un cadre et un plan d'action provinciaux concernant les maladies à transmission vectorielle.*

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

1550

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUILDING ONTARIO UP ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2015

LOI DE 2015 POUR FAVORISER L'ESSOR DE L'ONTARIO (MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Mr. Sousa moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts / *Projet de loi 91, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.*

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Mr. Sousa.

Hon. Charles Sousa: It's an honour to stand today in the House for third reading of Bill 91, Building Ontario Up Act (Budget Measures), 2015.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the budget process is a long process, involving enormous effort from a dedicated team of professionals—a long process, but a necessary one and a rewarding one. It is a process that ensures that the budget reflects the wishes of the people of Ontario.

This year, the process involved 11 pre-budget consultations across the province, from Windsor to Ottawa, from Thunder Bay to Sault Ste. Marie to Kingston and the Islands. We invited businesses and individuals to share their thoughts with us through pre-budget submissions. Almost 500 sent their thoughts, and we thank them for their input.

Then, of course, we received further input from second reading as the bill moved through committee hearings. I'm grateful to the members of this House and the finance and economic affairs committee, as well as private citizens and groups, for their input.

I must also thank my parliamentary assistant, Laura Albanese, as well as member Soo Wong as Chair for her hard work in helping move this bill through committee.

It was a long process to ensure we got this right, to ensure Bill 91 reflects the wishes and hopes of the people of Ontario for today and for the future, to protect, preserve and enhance the quality of life of people all across this province, to find more innovative ways to grow the economy, and to maintain the vital public services that families and communities rely on. That is what we did, Mr. Speaker.

This government plan includes making the largest infrastructure investment in Ontario's history—more than \$130 billion over 10 years. These infrastructure investments support Ontario's industries and create jobs and positions for Ontarians to better compete in the global economy, because when Ontario invests, it is building, and when it is building, it is growing.

Bill 91 continues and expands on Ontario's \$130-billion infrastructure plan. In the 2014 Ontario budget, we announced an investment of nearly \$29 billion in dedicated funds over 10 years in Moving Ontario Forward to fund transit, transportation and other priority infrastructure within and outside of the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.

In the 2015 Ontario budget, it would increase the dedicated funds for Moving Ontario Forward by \$2.6 billion, for a total of \$31.5 billion over 10 years. It would provide about \$16 billion in transit projects in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area and about \$15 billion available for transportation and other priority infrastructure projects outside of the GTHA.

To help pay for these investments, we're moving ahead with the plan to unlock the value of provincially

owned assets. The net proceeds would be reinvested through the Trillium Trust in public transit, transportation and other priority infrastructure projects.

The asset optimization plan includes broadening Hydro One ownership to create lasting public benefit and ongoing public and ratepayer protection, reviewing a number of prime-located real estate assets for sale as well, and the gain from the sale of our remaining GM shares back in February of this year.

The 2015 Ontario budget also supports this government's plan to invest in people's skills and training, because Ontario's greatest strength is its people. It's why we're continuing to improve education and skills training, from preschool and full-day kindergarten through post-secondary education and trade apprenticeship programs. This would include investing an additional \$250 million over the next two years in the Youth Jobs Strategy, bringing the total investment in youth employment programs to more than \$565 million.

Our plan would also modernize the Ontario Student Assistance Program to strengthen the financial assistance for all students. Helping Ontarians to get the right skills and the right jobs will help build, overall, a growing and stronger economy for tomorrow.

Our plan also includes supporting a dynamic and competitive business climate. I would like to mention a few things that are included in the 2015 budget to help business.

The budget would increase funding for a 10-year period for the \$2.5-billion Jobs and Prosperity Fund, and we're proposing in this budget to increase this by a total of \$200 million beginning in 2015-16. This would increase the fund to \$2.7 billion over 10 years and extend eligibility to the forestry sector. It would allow us to partner with more businesses, enhancing productivity, increasing innovation, growing exports and creating jobs.

We're proposing to continue electricity pricing support beyond March 2016 for qualifying large northern industrial facilities, which would sustain jobs and our global competitiveness.

Bill 91 helps Ontarians build a more secure retirement. If passed, it would establish the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan Administration Corp., a professional and independent pension organization that would be responsible for administering the ORPP.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, Bill 91 advances our proposal to reform beverage alcohol sales in the province. It would authorize the government's plans to expand beer sales to up to an additional 450 retail locations, including grocery stores, right across the province. Let me assure you that we would continue to uphold the principles of social responsibility by mandating in law strict controls over how beer is sold in these new locations. If passed, this bill would allow more convenience and choice for Ontarians, while maintaining a strong commitment to social responsibility.

This plan to build Ontario up is ambitious, but I assure you that it was made against the backdrop of fiscal responsibility. We'll continue managing program expense

growth through the medium term, which is projected to be held to an average of 0.9% between 2013-14 and 2017-18. Ontario is projecting a deficit of \$8.5 billion in 2015-16, an improvement compared with the deficit target laid out in the 2014 budget and which would still be the lowest level since the onset of the global recession. Our plan, which Bill 91 is a part of, continues to take a thoughtful and deliberate approach over the path to balance, with a forecast deficit of \$4.8 billion in 2016-17 and a return to balance by 2017-18. We're eliminating the deficit in a way that is both fair and responsible.

Bill 91 reflects the government's four-part plan to building Ontario up by investing in people's talents and skills, by building public infrastructure such as roads and transit, by creating a dynamic and innovative environment where businesses thrive, and by building a secure retirement savings plan. It positions Ontario to lead Canada in the modern economy through historic infrastructure and public transit investments to move goods to market faster, to get people home and to work more safely, and to make Ontario a more competitive and more productive province. That is why I ask the members of this Assembly to support Bill 91, Building Ontario Up Act (Budget Measures), 2015.

Together, we will build Ontario up.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I'd like to thank the minister.

Further debate?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Well, this is the last opportunity to speak for 20 minutes on exactly what Bill 91 will do and won't do. I've got a whole myriad of topics that I want to cover, because this budget is far reaching but doesn't reach very far.

Let me start. I'm going to start with reading, verbatim, from my local newspaper an article that ran in many newspapers across Ontario. When I read it, I thought, "Dang, they said exactly what I say in the Legislature every day." So I am going to take a moment and read this—respectfully.

"When Premier Kathleen Wynne is about to take more money from Ontarians, she says the magic word that is supposed to make it all okay.

"Her magic word is 'infrastructure.' When Wynne announced Ontario will introduce a cap-and-trade carbon pricing scheme, expected to pour up to \$2 billion more a year into government coffers because of higher consumer prices, government officials said the money would go to environmental projects like transit infrastructure.

"Ditto when Wynne announced her mandatory Ontario Retirement Pension Plan for three million workers, to be paid for by a 1.9% annual payroll tax starting in 2017, matched by their employers, raising \$3.5 billion a year.

1600

"In her 2014 budget, Wynne's officials said, 'By ... encouraging more Canadians to save through a proposed new Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, new pools of capital would be available for Ontario-based projects such as building roads, bridges and new transit.'

Translation: more infrastructure." I'm reading from the editorial, Speaker.

"When Wynne announced her impending sale of 60% of Hydro One to the private sector, she said \$4 billion of the \$9 billion the government hopes to raise would go to transit and infrastructure. Same goes for the \$100 million the government is planning to rake in through a new beer tax.

"But when, how and if this money is spent on infrastructure is anyone's guess.

"Wynne's predecessor, Dalton McGuinty, won power in 2003 promising not to raise taxes and then imposed the largest single tax grab in Ontario history, more than \$2 billion annually, which he said would be going into health care. Except we later learned some of the money went to general revenue, while health services were cut.

"What's disturbing is the Liberals' lack of focus on paying down Ontario's \$298.9-billion debt, up 115% from the \$138.8 billion they inherited ... in 2003.

"Or that this year, the Wynne Liberals will pay \$11.4 billion financing that debt—up from \$10.7 billion last year—before paying a penny of the principal.

"The Liberals' inability to control spending and debt is the reason they're forever developing new ways to get more money out of taxpayers.

"Infrastructure' is just their latest cover story."

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Stop the clock, please. Point of order. I recognize the member from Barrie.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: That is a prop he is using. He cannot use it, as I understand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you. I will remind the member to try to perhaps keep it a little bit lower so that it's not—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I understand that. I will overrule and say that he is allowed to use that.

Continue, please.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Thank you, Speaker. Now, you'll notice that I folded it over as small as it could be. I have glaucoma. I have to actually have it up close to my eyes. This is as hushed as I could keep it. I don't consider reading from national media to be a prop, as neither do you.

Let me read from another newspaper story, Speaker. Again, I said I'm going to be bouncing around here because in the 15 minutes I have left I want to cover so many topics that this budget actually either imposes on society or doesn't fix a problem. Here's one that it doesn't fix: "Ont. Second in Illegal Tobacco Sales." Now, that's really quite interesting to note in this newspaper, Speaker.

This article starts, "Ontario is second only to Panama when it comes to selling illegal tobacco in the Americas...." Now, that's quite fascinating.

"The KPMG report found that 31% of tobacco sold in Ontario is illegal, putting the province on par with El Salvador."

Speaker, here we are with an opportunity in Bill 91, in the budget, to tackle the hundreds of millions of dollars we can be earning from the sale of illegal tobacco, and instead we don't bother touching that.

But what we did touch, until our party and the other opposition party, I may say, began to dig deep into this, was the film tax credits. They're not going to chase several hundred million dollars in illegal tobacco, but they were putting a \$1.3-billion film industry immediately in jeopardy by rolling back the film tax credits. Now, it's a \$1.3-billion industry that was gobsmacked—it's the only word I can think of—by what this government was doing. All this—putting the entire sector in turmoil—was to save \$10 million. Now, \$10 million is a lot of money; don't get me wrong. But when you don't tackle the hundreds of millions, if not billions—according to this article, we lose \$2 billion a year in unpaid tobacco taxes across all of Canada, so our share is in the hundreds of millions. We ignore that, but we go after the film industry for \$10 million. That put \$1.3 billion worth of film in jeopardy.

Thankfully, we spoke loudly and clearly in this Legislature, and I will say that this government either listened or bumped their head; I'm not really sure what it was, Speaker. Anyway, they finally decided that was a very big mistake, and decided to “grandfather,” as the expression goes, the films that are already under way.

There are some things that boggle the mind. These guys just can't find a tax they don't like, so they chased that money and almost chased a billion dollars' worth of filming, not only out of the Toronto area; in our area in northern Ontario, we have \$30 million worth of filming going on right now, up from \$23 million last year. All of that was in jeopardy. My phone rang off the hook for weeks. Thankfully, our caucus—I will say we were joined with the NDP, and together we fought this one.

Now, here's one that we didn't win. The Auditor General came out with a special report, The Government's Proposed Amendments to the Government Advertising Act, 2004. In May 2015, just last month, the Auditor General brought this document to us. This is all about the government here, through this budget bill, tinkering with the Auditor General's powers over advertising. I can read a whole bunch of this, Speaker, but I'm only going to get to one little part in a moment.

Reading from the auditor's report, she's concerned about the impact on the credibility of her office. She will no longer be able to consider factors—this is on government advertising—such as “political context, the use of self-congratulatory messages, factual accuracy”—can you imagine that in the new bill, the Auditor General cannot consider factors such as factual accuracy?—“or an advertisement's criticisms of other political parties.”

That's what they want to do: not only stifle the auditor, but they want to move the auditor away so that these other things can be done. She said that “taxpayer-funded partisan government advertisements could very well see the light of day.” That's our Auditor General telling us this.

In one of the sections, “Advertising During an Election Period,” here is the Auditor General's commentary: “This change removes the Auditor General's discretion and empowers the government to run any ad it chooses during an election period.” That's the depths that this government is using the budget bill to change things to align the stars to help them along in all the things they're doing, and now using taxpayers' money to advertise these things, even during an election period. So we know what will come in three years.

We've heard from many organizations about the ORPP—the pension tax. We heard from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce this morning, along with 150 voices who signed a letter saying to the government, “Whoa. Hang on a second. This is nonsense. This is going to stifle Ontario businesses”—53 chambers of commerce throughout Ontario, together with 97 businesses. I'm talking about businesses such as Canadian Tire, Walmart, Ford, General Motors, Chrysler and Vale Inco—the list goes on and on—and small businesses, as well, that are going to have their business hurt by this pension tax.

We know it means that each employer will have to pay 1.9% of their employees' salaries into a fund, and each employee will lose 1.9% off their paycheque as well, to put in the fund. We've already heard from the Ministry of Finance. We got the document from the gas plant scandal hearings that told us that for every \$2 billion taken in payroll tax, the government will lose 18,000 jobs across the province. So if it is indeed about a \$3.5-billion tax grab, we know we are going to be poised to lose 30,000 jobs in Ontario. Speaker, this government knows this and still is ramming this through.

1610

When you look at the Ontario chamber, again, they talk about the fact that all this is coming at a time when business confidence—and why wouldn't it be?—is at its lowest. Three years ago, when the chamber did their study, business confidence in this government and in the province was 48%. The next year it grew to 49%. This year, it tumbled to 29%. Business does not want to locate in a jurisdiction that can't manage itself. They have the highest energy rates in North America. We have the highest payroll taxes in Canada. We have a debt that grew 100%. It took 137 years to get our debt to \$139 billion; it took these guys 10 years to double that debt. When you're now spending more money on interest than you are in most other ministries, you have to know that something is desperately wrong.

When we looked at the statistics, we had 2,700 fewer businesses in Ontario last year. Why? Because they've left Ontario for better-managed jurisdictions—jurisdictions with lower energy rates, jurisdictions with lower payroll taxes.

They cannot find a tax they don't salivate over. I've told the story of the Victor mine before—it's when diamonds were discovered in northern Ontario. After De Beers had already spent more than a billion dollars getting the mine ready to open, these guys surprised them

with a diamond tax, the first ever in Ontario. But they said, "Oh, don't worry. We're going to tax every diamond producer in the province." Of course, there is only the one.

We've asked the Ring of Fire companies about chromite, and they all continue to tell us they're very worried this government is going to develop a chromite tax. Through the gas plant scandal documents, yes indeed, as sure as we've said, we've now discovered the document that says they were going to implement a chromite tax to one of the proponents. We've said it all along. They've never denied it in the Legislature; they just change the topic—the Premier is going to go canoeing or something, which is probably exactly why we're up the creek without a paddle.

The most shocking thing that we've seen happen here is this fire sale of Hydro One. If you go back, they'll tell you very quickly, "Oh, no, all this money is going into infrastructure"—same as when I started off. When the government continued to say this money was going to be used for transit—well, if you look back in the 2014 budget, there already was asset sale money allocated. It was \$3.1 billion over four years. That doesn't sound like the \$4 billion they're getting from Hydro. There was no mention of the fact that they needed that amount of money from Hydro. That's all new, because they're broke. They're going to take that Hydro sale money and they're going to pay their bills with it. I have no idea what they're going to manage to sell the next year or the year after to pay the bills of this government, because they have a spending problem. Again, we don't have a revenue problem in Ontario—revenues were up—but we have a spending problem. Spending was up. Spending in this province is up. They don't know how to control their spending.

Here's a quote from the Ottawa Citizen:

"A reasonable person might wonder why we need to sell most of a significant public asset ... just to keep doing what we have been doing for years.

"The real answer, I suspect, is that putting some billions of new money into the province's transit trust will enable the government to quietly shift existing money to help it reduce the deficit or pay for other spending."

Speaker, that's what we've been saying all along. Ostensibly they will put the money into transit, but then carve what they already had in transit out to spend, likely frivolously, on things—who knows whether it's another Ornge, another gas plant scandal, another MaRS bailout, another smart meter fiasco. It's whatever fiasco, boondoggle of the day, they're going to come up with to find ways to fritter away another billion dollars of your money.

If we look at the Hydro One sale, there are really three major problems.

It is a secret process. We disclosed this in the clause-by-clause at committee. The government could have been forthright with the people and told us the details, but they haven't. They have not done that. They have not been

forthright with the people of Ontario. They continue to tell us one thing and then do something else. They are going to strip the Auditor General, the Integrity Commissioner, the privacy commissioner, the Ombudsman, the Financial Accountability Officer, freedom of information, the sunshine list—all those are going to be gone from the Hydro One we knew. This is the veil of secrecy that this government works under.

When we had a minority government, we were able to get documents through the gas plant scandal hearings. Thankfully, we learned so much about exactly the breadth and length that this government will go through to deflect and, in this case, delete, and, as it turns out, to deceive the people of the province of Ontario.

The second point was the loss of majority ownership. We're going to go from owning 100% of Hydro—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I would ask that the member withdraw.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Withdraw, Speaker.

This government deleted files. I can leave it to the people to decide why they deleted those files.

We are going to lose a majority of ownership. We're going to go from 100% to a minority position, 40%. We are going to have the loss of all of that consumer protection.

This is a fire sale. They're broke. They have no money. In fact, they have a deficit again this year. Our deficit grew, from three years ago, Speaker, from \$9.2 billion up to \$10.5 billion, up to \$10.9 billion. They can't stop their spending, and now they are looking for any way to fill the holes. They're going to sell off Hydro One to fill one of the holes. They're going to start next year by selling the LCBO warehouse and the OPG headquarters. They are going to continue to sell things until they run out. That only puts a band-aid on the problem. It doesn't fix the problem that they're spending more money than we take in. This budget is a complete disaster, Speaker, and does not address the core problems in Ontario. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate?

Ms. Catherine Fife: As always, it's a privilege to stand in this House to discuss legislation before us, although I must tell you I have mixed feelings about this particular bill, Bill 91, the budget bill for 2015.

I wish I could stand up in this House with some confidence and talk about how this bill potentially could help us. But I have to tell you that this budget fails the people of this province on job creation, on conservation and on education, and it accelerates the privatization agenda of this government.

The general tenor and tone of this piece of legislation speaks to a lost government, Mr. Speaker. This budget also—people have described it as being very deceptive. It's a deceptive document, because it gives false choices to the people of this province.

It also seeks to redefine the basic language that we've used in this House for years, like the definition of "partisan," for instance, like the definition of "catastrophic

impairment.” Language is important. The definition of that language is also important.

1620

This government is actively trying to redefine the role of government, really, in the province of Ontario. It rams through changes that no Ontarian voted for, and I need to get that on record. The people of this province have not had their say. They have not had the chance to speak to the sell-off of Hydro One. They have not had the chance to stand up against the sale of Hydro One. They have not even had the opportunity yet to hold their MPPs accountable for the sell-off of Hydro One. But mark my words, Mr. Speaker: That day will come—it will come. The members on the opposite side of this House will feel the pressure in their own ridings as the summer progresses, as they should, because the people of this province feel that they have been deceived.

This government did not run on the sell-off of Hydro One. It is not only just wrong-headed; it's short-sighted, and I'll go into some details. It doesn't make fiscal sense, economic sense, to sell off this strategic public asset.

I also want to get on the record that Premier Wynne and this government have used a Harper-style time allocation motion to limit debate in this House and at committee. It is shocking, Mr. Speaker, that two thirds of the Ontarians who applied to be heard at the budget hearings were shut out—two thirds—because of time allocation. Also, this government only chose to consult in Toronto. There is more to the province of Ontario than Toronto. Toronto is very important, but if you are in Windsor or if you are in Timmins or if you're in Ottawa, it's a hard place to get to.

Maybe I missed something, but I certainly don't remember Premier Wynne telling Ontarians that she would govern this province just like Stephen Harper has governed the country. That certainly was not made clear during the last election. I do remember the Premier saying, prior to the last election, that she “was going to do government differently,” and that she would “open up and be more transparent.” That's from the *Globe and Mail*, March 6, 2014.

Speaker, using time allocation motions to sell off publicly owned assets sounds a great deal like the kind of politics practised by Mr. Harper, and sounds nothing like doing politics differently. In fact, it's very akin to the politics practised at the federal level, which is based in fear and based on false choices.

I think the false-choices piece is that this government has said that they have to sell Hydro One to fund infrastructure. That's a false choice. If we just take a step back to 2010, when the Premier was then the Minister of Transportation, she pulled \$4 billion out of transit, and then she cut corporate taxes. That was a choice that she made, and that's the problem, because that's why we have an infrastructure deficit and a transit deficit in the province of Ontario. And that's why she's holding up the sale of Hydro One as if that's going to be the answer to this problem. It is not. It will only fund 3% of their promises. We all know, in this House, that Liberals are

very fond of coming to our ridings and making promises, especially on transit.

We have some serious concerns with this budget, and we've been very vocal about it, and that is our job.

Ontarians, though, did not vote to sell off Hydro One. They don't want to pay the price for this short-sighted decision. They deserve to be heard. But Premier Wynne is ramming through her plan without giving people their say. This is a fact. Hearings were held for only four days, and only in Toronto, as I said. Ontarians in the north, the southwest and the east—none of them voted for a government that would sell off Hydro One. If the sale of Hydro One had been part of that platform, people would have not have voted for Liberals. That is not a stretch. Wynne didn't campaign on this, and doesn't have a mandate to sell Ontario's Hydro One.

There is a fundamental issue of accountability here that we ran up against. We ran into a brick wall at finance committee. The government's new amendments do nothing to stop the removal of oversight of the independent officers, which we have raised as a concern. They have just extended the period before oversight is removed, and restricted their oversight powers. This is just tinkering with democracy. That is what happened at committee.

In an unprecedented move, eight of the independent officers of this Legislature have spoken out against this government and the decision to sell off Hydro One and to remove their oversight. This is the most open and transparent government? The Auditor General, the Ombudsman, the Financial Accountability Officer, the privacy commissioner, the Integrity Commissioner, the French Language Services Commissioner, the children's advocate, the Environmental Commissioner—all of them used the strength of their office to raise awareness, to peel back the layers. Perhaps we're going to have to somehow figure out a way to unlock the truth in this place, or broaden the definition of “truth.” Perhaps that's going to be in budget 2016.

This budget will result in the following: The AG will not be able to conduct performance audits on Hydro One and the Ombudsman will have no ability to investigate public complaints against Hydro One. And why is this important? The people of this province know why it's important—the people do. The Ombudsman's most recent report, from last week, revealed that 84,000 people got the wrong bills or bill information. It was only because of the independence and the enforcement powers of the Ombudsman that Ontarians got the help they needed. That door will be slammed shut in the face of Ontarians when this bill passes tomorrow.

A corporate ombudsman will only be responsible to the corporation, not to Ontarians. The cellphone companies have ombudsman offices. Cable companies have ombudsman offices. The 407 has an ombudsman office. When was the last time you heard a critical, hard-hitting report from those people from those places? People understand what is happening here; they really do. This is not open and this is not transparent.

The Information and Privacy Commissioner will no longer be able to oversee the right of access to records held by Hydro One. The Financial Accountability Officer will not be able to examine the impact of the planned hydro operations on consumers and the economy. We just got the Financial Accountability Officer here. We just brought him here, and the first thing that this government did was shut him out of his job. I think he's been moved twice. If there was ever a role for the Financial Accountability Officer, it would be to look at this Hydro One deal, because, as has been declared by even a white collar fraudster from jail, this is the biggest con job he's ever seen in the province of Ontario. The numbers don't add up.

Lobbyists will no longer be required to report whether they are lobbying Hydro One. The Integrity Commissioner will no longer review Hydro One expense claims to ensure prudent spending. People are shocked and they are so disappointed.

The most recent report that I saw on the financial piece of this deal is from the Peters report. Mr. Douglas Peters is a former chief economist for TD Bank, secretary of state for finance and a Liberal MP. He says that selling off Hydro One is the wrong decision. "It was not appropriate to sell the electricity business to outside investors in the past, and we do not believe it is appropriate for the province of Ontario to sell it now."

What this sale of Hydro One proves is that the first priority of this government is Bay Street, and then the people come much lower down on the list. "Selling 15% of Hydro One instead of borrowing for infrastructure investment will actually result in a net loss"—this is really important for people to understand—"to the public of \$84.7 million a year." Hydro One is a profitable company; it brings revenue into this Legislature, which we invest in health care, education and infrastructure. It's burning the furniture to heat the house. And then Mr. Peters goes on to say that "selling a 60% stake will cause a net annual loss of \$338.8 million."

The finances on this scheme are not sound. I know there are people on that side of the House who know it. The numbers do not add up. The valuation that Mr. Clark has said this government is going to get for the sale of the shares of Hydro One does not add up. Mr. Clark's pro bono work definitely didn't add up. It cost the people of this province \$7 million in consulting fees.

Moving on to the ORPP as a non-public entity: In the finance committee, we introduced amendments that would have made the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan Administration Corp. a more transparent and accountable organization. The Liberal members of that committee voted against every one of these amendments. Those amendments included requiring quarterly reporting by the ORPP Administration Corp. to the Minister of Finance. Yes, you would want to see quarterly reports. You know why? Because this is the first province-specific pension plan of its kind in Canada, so you want to get it right and you want to monitor the success of it. Or you don't. And clearly they don't, because they're not invested in the success of the ORPP, Mr. Speaker.

1630

One of our amendments would require that the minister is notified of every bylaw and all changes to the bylaws of the ORPP Administration Corp. This is a corporation that needs to be watched. This was another amendment that came forward in finance, transferring the shares of Hydro One to a corporation that has not yet been created. Then another amendment tied the hands of all future governments around oversight. I said to the members of the finance committee at the time, "Wouldn't you like to get back on that 407 deal? Why tie the hands of future governments?" But that's what this government has done. It has washed its hands of ensuring that accountability and oversight is possible with the ORPP.

The third amendment that we brought in would have eliminated the use of "expert" board directors, which would be comprised of private-sector financial industry executives and would require a culture tending towards risk-taking and executive compensation. I want to tell you why we were so concerned about this, Mr. Speaker: because the same thing happened in BC. The managers of the pension fund became very wealthy; they became very rich at the BC Investment Management Corp. In fact, in one year they saw a 20% increase in their salaries. They tied their profits to pay-by-performance. It says, "Public Sector Salaries: B.C. Investment Management Corp. Dominates Top 10 list Again." Perhaps that's what the government is looking to do, creating 10 good jobs at this pension plan corporation, but not ensuring that there's oversight, not ensuring that there's accountability and not ensuring that the money gets to the people who need it, the people of this province.

We moved those amendments; they got shot down—just completely shot down. We tried get some union representation on this board of the corporation as well. Why, Mr. Speaker, you may ask? I'm sure you're wondering. Corporations that are investing employees' hard-earned dollars, i.e., pension funds, should ensure that those individual voices are heard. This can be achieved by making sure that the people on that board are actually invested in ensuring that that board is successful.

Changes to partisan advertising: My colleague from the PC caucus raised this. We may not always agree on things, but changing the definition of partisan—how partisan of you. I mean, honestly. We believe that the Liberals' proposed changes to government advertising will allow Liberals to produce the same kind of partisan ads paid with public dollars that we've seen so much of from the Stephen Harper government, Premier Harper. I mean, you have to admit it's really annoying to see an advertisement that you paid for when they tell you how great a job they're doing, when, based on their economic record—I mean, the evidence is there—it's an epic fail on job creation at the federal level, Mr. Speaker.

But this government, which criticizes the federal government for doing the same thing, moved ahead. The Auditor General, in the press conference, said that clearly the Liberals are trying to make a mockery of her office. She gave a really good example. The President of the

Treasury Board said, "You know what? She's turning down all these ads, and we've spent all this money—like \$40,000 here, \$60,000"—they're worried about \$40,000 and \$60,000 but couldn't be worried about \$1.1 billion in gas plant money. Yet here they are. So the president says, "This is unacceptable. They're turning down these ads." One of the ads that they turned down cost \$300,000 and it showed a booming manufacturing sector in the province of Ontario; and the Auditor General had to say, "That is not true. We do not have a booming manufacturing sector in the province of Ontario. You've wasted \$300,000. You are not allowed to put that advertisement out into the public because it's deceptive, because it is not truthful, because it is false." And the government doesn't like that, so they're changing the rules. They're changing the rules around partisanship.

Coming soon to a television near you, I'm sure we'll be told how wonderful the shareholders are doing, and Hydro One, and how we should care about that. You know what the people of this province care about? They care about staying the owners of Hydro One, Mr. Speaker. They don't want to be the renters. So we agree with the Auditor General on this entirely, of course. We believe the Auditor General any day of the week compared to the government. We believe her on P3s. We believe her on road maintenance. We believe, actually, that she's doing a very good job and that she's speaking truth to power, and I understand that the power that is here right now in this majority Liberal government doesn't like it.

But do you know what we don't like? We don't like you changing the rules so that the people of this province have to pay for false advertising and feeding it back to us as citizens.

I know that people in my riding—one lady said, "This just adds insult to injury." She quite rightly said, "I'm sure that they're going to spin off something about Hydro One."

One change that I didn't get a chance to speak to in committee was the definition of catastrophic impairment. We didn't get to that because, of course, it was time-allocated—because you don't want democracy to get in the way of a bad budget.

Schedule 17 of the budget changed the definition of catastrophic impairment. Unlike the Liberals and the PCs, we voted this schedule down in its entirety because it will slash benefits to a segment of Ontario's most vulnerable population, those with catastrophic and serious impairment as a result of auto-related accidents. The government's amendments involve increasing the threshold of tort deductibles and indexing it to inflation. Benefits, however, will not increase at all.

Rhona Feldt-Stein wrote a letter to us and she said: "Consider a five-year-old child who suffers a traumatic head injury while being a passenger in their parent's car. Many of the child's injuries will not show their traumatic effect" until later down the line. "Currently, the insurance regime would permit \$1 million for medical-rehab

benefits and another \$1 million for attendant care...." This amendment cuts it in half, Mr. Speaker. It's a shameful thing.

She says, "No one asks to be an accident victim...." People on that side of the House need to remember that people don't choose to get in a car accident. They don't choose to be the victim of an accident.

She goes on to say, "I just can't think of a more inhumane thing our government could do to these people."

Honestly, where is the care? Where is the compassion? Where is the openness? Where is the transparency? It is not a budget that will meet the needs of the people of this province.

We did fight back on the cuts to film and TV tax credits. We did work with the Ontario film and television industry. I want to let you know, Mr. Speaker, and I want the government to hear, that we're going to continue to fight for these tax credits. Do you know why? Because this sector puts much more back into the provincial treasury than the credits take out. So it's working. You can't even do something right when it's working. This government has already poisoned the well by introducing the reduction in tax credits, going forward, so they're scaring investment away from Ontario in the film industry.

The Trillium Trust Act is the final thing we didn't get to because of time allocation. Nobody trusts that the Trillium Trust is going to get the money that is set aside because there is no clear path to get the money there, to get it for infrastructure.

I think that we can all agree that when we stand in this House, we are speaking from a position of privilege. It is a position of privilege that we hold, and it is a trust that we hold. What has happened in this majority Liberal government is that they have breached that trust with this budget. We will not be supporting it. As I said, it does nothing on job creation, on conservation. Instead, it aggressively embraces the privatization of public services and turns its back on the people of this province, who we are all supposed to serve. It is a bad budget. It's the austerity budget 2.0, and it's a shame.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate?

Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 13, 2015, I'm now required to put the question.

Mr. Sousa has moved third reading of Bill 91, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

1640

But hold on to the bells. I have just been kindly given a deferral slip.

"To the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly:

"Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request that the vote on third reading of Bill 91 be deferred until deferred votes on Wednesday, June 3, 2015."

Third reading vote deferred.

GREAT LAKES PROTECTION ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA PROTECTION DES GRANDS LACS

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 16, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin / Projet de loi 66, Loi visant la protection et le rétablissement du bassin des Grands Lacs et du fleuve Saint-Laurent.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate? I recognize the member from Prince Edward-Hastings.

Mr. Todd Smith: That's great. I recognize you, too, Speaker. Thank you very much and good afternoon.

It's great to join the debate here this afternoon on Bill 66, which is the Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015. I come from a riding that obviously borders the Great Lakes, Prince Edward-Hastings, right on Lake Ontario, on the south shore of Prince Edward county. The Bay of Quinte loops in between the peninsula that is Prince Edward county and the rest of Hastings county and the city of Belleville. Deseronto is on the Bay of Quinte waterfront, which is also in my riding, and the Tyendinaga Mohawk territory, and the city of Quinte West, as well. We have a very beautiful area, and there is a lot of water in Prince Edward-Hastings. We are on the Great Lakes basin.

Prince Edward county really does rely on the Great Lakes, as well, for so many things, but tourism is obviously a huge issue in Prince Edward county. It's a huge economic driver in Prince Edward county. All you have to do is think back to the Winter Olympics last year, when they were on in Sochi, Russia, and the Ontario ads that were running. I know that the government and Tourism Ontario understand the importance of Prince Edward county to tourism in Ontario, because in that 30-second commercial, not only did they have a clip of Prince Edward county; they had two, three and four clips of different landscapes in Prince Edward county.

Of course we have Sandbanks Provincial Park. I come from the Maritimes, as you know, Mr. Speaker. I have been to Cavendish, PEI, and the sandbanks remind me so much of the dunes at Cavendish, but there are so many different beaches all around Prince Edward county, and Sandbanks is a big, beautiful sandy beach with dunes. There's North Beach, which is beautiful flat stone beaches, and there are pebble beaches and—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Stop the clock. I would ask that the members listen attentively to that which is being debated. I'm hearing too much chatter in the background, so I would ask that respect be shown,

not only to the member but to the Chair as well. Thank you very much.

Back to the member from Prince Edward-Hastings.

Mr. Todd Smith: I appreciate that, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, summer vacation is just around the corner, and I know there are some members of the NDP who would love to travel to Prince Edward-Hastings and spend some time there on Lake Ontario. As they know—I know they know this—we have the fastest-growing wine region in Ontario, as well, in Prince Edward county. The soil there is perfect for growing grapes.

Interjection: Cider, too.

Mr. Todd Smith: We have a great cider house down there, County Cider. Grant Howes is actually here in the building today. The craft cider group is here right now, and 15 minutes from now, we'll be able to sample some of their Ontario-grown products, as well. Grant Howes is here from County Cider and Waupoos Cider. His is just one of the 22 different cideries that are in Ontario, employing 2,200 people. They could employ so many more if we would pass some legislation like the Raise a Glass to Ontario Act, which was before the Legislature earlier. I digress, but if you get a chance, try the County Cider or the Waupoos Cider. It's fantastic.

But Prince Edward county obviously depends on the Great Lakes for its tourism. When you look at that ad that was on during the Olympics last year and you see Sandbanks and you see the wineries and you see the County Cider operation and the wine trail and the Arts Trail and the Cheddar and Ale Trail—I mean, there is so much going on in Prince Edward county, and it is the Great Lakes that bring everybody to Prince Edward county, either to camp at Sandbanks, where we have so many cottage areas now that make Prince Edward county a great destination.

We in the provincial Progressive Conservative Party believe that we do have to make sure our water is as clean as possible, that our ecosystems are clean and that we're bringing forward legislation that actually makes sense for the province but, more importantly, legislation that's actually going to do something.

I think that's the key with this piece of legislation. There's not really any money behind this piece of legislation. I think what we're seeing here is a little bit of photo op environmentalism on behalf of the government. There's nothing behind this but a flashy title and an opportunity to stand up and say that we're doing something when, really, there's not a lot happening in this bill. We'll get back to that in a minute, but I did want to continue the tour of Prince Edward-Hastings.

As you head to the north shore of Prince Edward county, you get onto the Bay of Quinte. The Bay of Quinte was designated as a hotspot in the province. It needed to be cleaned up. Things are happening there, partly because of an invasive species, which isn't the way you want to see things get cleaned up, but the zebra mussel came in and cleaned up the bay. But there have been local efforts to clean up the Bay of Quinte that have really done a great job to make sure that the Bay of

Quinte is a resource that the city of Belleville has and the city of Quinte West has.

I know that Quinte West has just installed a beautiful marina, and the province was very helpful in making that happen. I know that Mayor John Williams in Quinte West put a lot of effort into continuing to twist the arm of the MPP from Northumberland-Quinte West to ensure that that happened. Finally, after some delays, the slips are in there, and boats will be making their way through the Bay of Quinte and up the Trent-Severn Waterway. But it's because of the efforts of the mayor of Quinte West, John Williams, who had this vision. Of course, he has a large boat himself, so I'm not exactly sure if this was all about Mr. Williams or the community. I'm kidding, of course. It was all about Quinte West and growing the economy in Quinte West.

They have done what they needed to do in Quinte West, which was to totally renovate their downtown. They put a lot of local money into the downtown, ensuring that Quinte West and downtown Trenton are a destination that people who are on the waterway will want to stop in and take advantage of the shops and the restaurants that are there in downtown Trenton.

We want to see the same thing happening in Belleville. We want to see the same thing happening in Deseronto as well. You know, Deseronto used to have a beautiful marina there, but because some private investors are having some difficulty in getting building permits in that area—we're going to be working with Infrastructure Ontario to try to ensure that happens.

But let's get to the bill here, because I don't have a lot of time. We are talking about Bill 66, which is the Great Lakes Protection Act. One of the first bills—it actually was the very first bill that I debated when I arrived here after being elected in 2011: Bill 10. I remember it specifically because it was on December 1, 2011. It was the Local Municipality Democracy Act. The biggest issue in Prince Edward county during my election campaign, during that summer and fall, was the fact that wind turbines were being forced onto an unwilling host municipality in Prince Edward county.

Interjection: Continue to be.

Mr. Todd Smith: And they haven't stopped. They continue to try and force these wind turbines on a community that clearly doesn't want them. The municipal council has declared itself an unwilling host municipality. There are five local groups down there with hundreds and hundreds of Prince Edward county residents involved in these five groups that are trying to stop the government from forcing these wind turbines on them. The chamber of commerce in Prince Edward county doesn't want to have any part of having these wind turbines there because they say it's going to have a negative impact on their number one industry, which is their tourism industry.

I worry that the same type of legislation that brought us the Green Energy Act and the same kind of unintended consequences that resulted from the Green Energy Act could occur with Bill 66, and that would be stripping local autonomy.

1650

When I debated Bill 10 in the Legislature back in 2011, we didn't have it pass. My caucus—there were 38 of us—voted in support of this, because we wanted to give local municipal councils the ability to make decisions in their municipality when it comes to the Planning Act. The NDP and the Liberals teamed up to vote against that bill. But I can tell you that with this bill that is before us now, Bill 66, the same types of things could happen.

We've already seen the devastation that the loss of local autonomy can have on communities right across southwestern Ontario. It's crazy, when you drive down the 401 through the Chatham area and basically all the way from London to Windsor: The Green Energy Act has stripped out all the local decision-making, and they've littered our rural landscapes with these unwanted industrial wind farms; these industrial wind turbines.

The people of Ontario didn't give this government a mandate to remove local decision-making processes and replace them with more red tape. When I first arrived here, back in 2011, I was the critic for small business and red tape. So I had the opportunity to travel the province and meet with stakeholder groups from Windsor right through to Ottawa and north into Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie as well. Everywhere I went, people wanted to talk about red tape.

Red tape is one of the biggest problems we have in Ontario, and I worry that this bill, Bill 66, is only going to create more duplication. We already have pieces of legislation in place that are looking after protecting our water sources—protecting the Great Lakes. What this could potentially do is create more overlap and more red tape that is going to make it even more difficult for development in areas and make the burden deeper for municipalities to deal with.

The frameworks are already in place with other pieces of legislation that are out there. We just worry that the costs involved for local municipalities, and the costs involved for developers as well—it's going to create confusion; it's going to create conflicts in our communities. What we really need, instead of creating another layer of bureaucracy, is to allow our stewardship councils that already exist in our municipalities, in our regions and in our ridings to do their work, and they need some funding to do that. These stewardship councils, mostly made up of volunteers, are doing excellent work across our province. The last thing we need to do is make it more difficult for them to do the work they want to do.

Bill 66 doesn't provide any funding, but it gives the government the opportunity to stand up here and say it is doing something by passing another toothless environmental bill that creates more red tape. It creates the illusion that the government is protecting the environment when, really, I would challenge the government in five years' time—and I will challenge them in five years' time, because we're all going to be here; we'll be over on that side of the House at that time. We'll challenge them to see the results of Bill 66 and what the positive outcome from Bill 66 is. I suspect we'll have the same

kind of results we saw from the Green Energy Act, when this party argued against the Green Energy Act because of the unintended consequences it was going to create across the province.

When I talk about duplication of services—I apologize to those in Hansard for hitting my microphone—Canada and the United States have established the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement to restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the Great Lakes basin ecosystem. Under this agreement—and I'll give credit to our critic for the environment, Lisa Thompson from Huron—Bruce—

Interjection: And climate change.

Mr. Todd Smith: And climate change as well.

The US and Canadian governments have identified the need, as a result of this piece of legislation that already exists, to:

- develop water quality and ecosystem health objectives and report progress to the public regularly;

- clean up areas of concern in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin;

- develop a comprehensive lake-wide management plan to protect and remediate near-shore waters;

- reduce toxic chemicals in the Great Lakes, like mercury and PCBs;

- reduce nutrients like phosphorus that lead to the growth of algal blooms that degrade drinking water quality, impair fish spawning and adversely impact commercial and recreational fishing, swimming, tourism and the overall enjoyment of the Great Lakes;

- prevent discharges from shipping vessels, such as garbage, sewage, invasive species and other pollutants;

- stop the spread of invasive species by developing and implementing early detection and rapid response programs;

- complete the development of and begin implementing lake-wide habitat and species protection, restoration and conservation strategies within two years;

- identify contaminants in groundwater discharged into the Great Lakes;

- develop plans to protect and restore near-shore areas, the primary source of drinking water for Great Lakes communities;

- reaffirm actions necessary to restore and delist areas of concern;

- identify new toxic substances and implement pollution prevention and control strategies; and

- develop conservation strategies to protect native species and restore habitat.

This is the mandate under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement between the US and Canadian governments. That's only one of the agreements that's already in place.

Of course, we have municipal bylaws, as well, that need to be followed. We have conservation authorities, which have their own set of rules and regulations. We have other ministry rules and regulations at the provincial level. Why on earth are we slapping on another layer of bureaucracy and another layer of red tape? It's enough to

drive you crazy, really. I know it is driving people crazy right across the province, because I hear from them all the time. They can't get anything done any longer.

We do have concerns about this guardians' council as well. The current wording regarding the guardians' council only confirms that the minister will sit as the council's chair and be joined by those people he or she considers advisable. Now is that not a scary prospect, when you think of it? It's allowing the minister to choose who's going to sit at the guardians' council table. There's no mention in here that agriculture is going to be represented on this board. I think it's very important—because they're one of the largest stakeholders that would be impacted by this—that we have someone from the agricultural sector sitting on this. It's very, very scary when I think of the prospects of this government getting to pick and choose who's going to be on this guardians' council.

This is going to also limit the opportunity for public participation, as a hand-selected Liberal council provides no insurance that all relevant stakeholder interests will be represented—as I mentioned, the agriculture industry. When I think back to my riding, the agriculture industry in Prince Edward county is doing extremely well, but I worry how it might be impacted by this piece of legislation.

I was talking about industrial wind turbines on the land in Prince Edward county. There are two projects currently before the Environmental Review Tribunal, or even the courts in Ontario, when it comes to these two wind turbine projects for Prince Edward county that still have to be dealt with, but it doesn't prevent wind turbines from being installed in the Great Lakes, as well, which I know is a concern.

Mr. Bill Walker: There's a lawsuit with one of those right now.

Mr. Todd Smith: There is a massive lawsuit that's happening in regard to projects that were cancelled, or at least there's a moratorium where Liberals are represented in the Scarborough area and the Scarborough Bluffs, but there's nothing in this that would prevent industrial wind turbines from showing up in the Great Lakes—in the water, Mr. Speaker—and we worry about that as well.

There's no respect for landowners in this, as well. It's another one of the issues that we have. The Liberals are trying to sneak through sections of a bill that will allow for warrantless entry onto private property. This is a concern, not just with this bill, but with many other bills that we've seen before the Legislature as well. In the case of farmers, this can be dangerous, to have uninvited guests wandering onto the property.

One thing this Premier has said that she was going to do—and she promised to do this back at the ROMA/OGRA conference at the Royal York Hotel, the Rural Ontario Municipal Association and Ontario Good Roads Association conference at the Royal York back in February. She said that she was going to address pieces of legislation through a rural lens. I know that's something that our critic Lisa Thompson speaks of all the

time: that we need to take these pieces of legislation that are developed mostly here in Toronto—and let's face it, Toronto is a heck of a lot different than rural Ontario. We need to take that rural lens and see how it's going to impact those who live in rural Ontario.

1700

I get a call almost every week from a gentleman named Scotty Anderson. I know the member from Northumberland—Quinte West knows him well. He wrote me a couple of weeks ago. He gave me all kinds of newspaper articles. Every time I appear on the Lorne Brooker Show on CJBQ, he's talking to me about the dangers of expanding the greenbelt and the loss of property value and the fact that things can't be developed in these areas. They lose their property value. These are some of the unintended consequences.

I know this government loves to play good politics. They don't like to develop good and meaningful policy. They play photo op environmentalism—and that's exactly what Bill 66 is doing, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Questions and comments?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I'm glad to follow the speech from the member. You can tell he has a lot of passion on the topic. I want to talk about some of my passions.

When we're talking about Bill 66, the Great Lakes Protection Act, one of the things we have to keep in mind is that water is one of our most precious resources. In fact, many academics talk about the future, and in the future—where we see modern-day warfare around the issue of scarcity of oil as a resource—one of the issues that people will talk about in terms of scarcity is going to be fresh water.

We've already seen some of the impacts of climate change and how it has impacted the availability of this resource. If you look at California, they're now entering into multiple years of a very serious drought, and it's now seriously impacting the farmers of California. California, as you know, is one of the major agricultural hubs in North America, and they've been significantly impacted by a drought.

Water, particularly fresh water, is such a precious resource. It's a necessity of life. In Canada, and in particular in Ontario, we have access to the most freshwater sources in the world. We are only rivalled by perhaps Russia, in terms of our access to fresh water. With the Great Lakes surrounding the province of Ontario, we have some of the most readily available access to this precious resource. It's the source of life, it's a natural resource, and it's a resource we need to protect.

There was a time when we could drink any lake water with ease, without any concern about pollutants or contaminants. Now that's not the case. There are significant issues now with the quality of our water.

It's something we need to protect not only for ourselves but for our future generations. We owe it as a legacy to our future generations, to ensure that this water is protected.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Questions and comments?

Hon. Jeff Leal: Mr. Speaker, what a delight it was for me to take the opportunity to listen to the very articulate remarks from my good friend from Prince Edward—Hastings on Bill 66.

But the real announcement I want to make today is that a former assistant coach from the Belleville Bulls is now employed with the Peterborough Petes in Peterborough.

Let me tell you, I know Scott Anderson. The member referenced Scott Anderson, so let's talk about him for a moment. I know his biggest disappointment today is that he can't get season's tickets this fall for the Belleville Bulls at the Yardmen Arena—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Minister of Agriculture, I'd just like to remind you that we are addressing Bill 66 and not the Belleville Bulls. I appreciate the hockey update, but if you could stick to the topic, I'd appreciate that.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Absolutely. Sorry. Mr. Speaker, with the recent Memorial Cup, I do get passionate about Junior A hockey in the province of Ontario.

Let me get to Bill 66, the Great Lakes Protection Act.

I've been in the Belleville area many times. Actually, I got to open the extension to the Yardmen Arena with my good friend from Prince Edward—Hastings. We gave him a speaking role that day, to make sure he could offer congratulations.

Bill 66 is important to the citizens of Prince Edward—Hastings. I've been down there with my good friend the member from Northumberland—Quinte West for the famous walleye tournament in the Bay of Quinte—a tournament, Mr. Speaker, that brings millions of dollars to the great community of Belleville.

One of the things that's so important about the Great Lakes Protection Act is to sustain the recreational fishing that's in the Bay of Quinte. I'm not sure the member from Prince Edward—Hastings got to that very important aspect of Bill 66.

Of course, it's very interesting if you look at the reports from the IJC, the International Joint Commission. Mr. Speaker, coming from Chatham, you're well aware of the IJC and the work they do in Lake Erie.

We're here. We want to get everybody on board with Bill 66, to make sure that we protect the fishery in the Bay of Quinte.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I appreciate the heart with which the member from Prince Edward—Hastings delivered his comments on Bill 66. He gets it. He lives in that community. He understands the stress that this Liberal government has placed on his constituents on a number of fronts.

But first things first: We have to call Bill 66 what it is. It's nothing more than an environmental photo op, Speaker. That's all this is going to be. Because at the end of the day, three years from now, when we take a look at

what's going to happen, you know what? They're not going to hold true.

When I speak to my constituents, my municipalities, my conservation authorities, there's a lot of concern about Bill 66, quite frankly. Do you know why a lot of people are kind of anxious to call this government out? They want to stay in discussion with this government. They almost feel like they're being intimidated if they don't support it. The fact of the matter is that they're concerned about Bill 66. With regard to geographically focused initiatives, Speaker, there is absolutely not one cent that was identified in the most recent budget that was proposed. We don't know where the money is coming from for geographically focused initiatives. That could be very well defined outside of a local municipality.

That begs the point of the member from Prince Edward–Hastings when he talked about local autonomy and fear of losing yet more. He proves the point that the lack of details is where the devil really is. We feel strongly that Bill 66 is kind of an umbrella of an attempt to withdraw yet more local decision-making from our municipalities.

It's interesting, though, that the Great Lakes Protection Act has a lot of parallels to the Green Energy Act, which was introduced in 2009. People are pretty shy about what happened there.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: It's a pleasure to rise to speak to Bill 66, the Great Lakes Protection Act. I did appreciate the comments from the member from Prince Edward–Hastings. He may or may not know this, but every February for the last 13 years, myself and my uncles and a lot of members of my family travel up to the Bay of Quinte and we do an annual ice fishing tournament. It's some of the most beautiful country you might see and find in Ontario, and it is home to some world-class pickerel fishing. It's not walleye, Speaker; we call them pickerel in Ontario. They're walleye on the other side of the border.

That also reminds us that, of course, we do share our Great Lakes with our partners, our friends and cousins to the south of us, the Americans, who have a responsibility to maintain the quality of water and to protect it. Some jurisdictions have gone well above what this province has done; some have certainly not met some standards.

There are threats that we all know: invasive species. There are threats coming in from shipping containers that have introduced invasive species like the zebra mussel and otherwise have decimated some parts of the Great Lakes. We have to be cognizant of them and we have to ensure that we do everything that we can.

However, Speaker, this bill does not necessarily prescribe the remedies to the issues that we know are pressing. We know that there's a proposal on the table to bury massive amounts of nuclear waste within the Great Lakes basin, and I have yet to hear the Minister of Natural Resources or, specifically, the Minister of the

Environment and Climate Change address that issue at all. It's an enormous concern that has those who live around the Great Lakes basin very fearful that the government will not stand in the way of industry when it comes to protecting the Great Lakes.

We look forward to seeing some meat within this bill and look forward to continuing to debate it.

1710

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the member for Prince Edward–Hastings for final comments.

Mr. Todd Smith: It's much appreciated, the comments from the member for Essex. I hope the weather was fine when you were there this past February for walleye fishing. I don't know why they call it "walleye" on the Bay of Quinte, but they do. They have the walleye world tournament, so the minister wasn't wrong about that. But they do have pickerel fish fries. They have the walleye world and pickerel fries.

I'd also like to thank the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton and my colleague from Huron–Bruce as well, and the member from Peterborough, the Minister of Agriculture. It must be tough for him to congratulate the Oshawa Generals, because they are the archival of the Peterborough Petes. They were the Memorial Cup champions, and congratulations to them.

We used to love the trips to Peterborough with the Belleville Bulls to see the Dalliday boys and hang out at the Memorial Centre. I'll miss those trips with the Belleville Bulls. Now I've got to go to Hamilton and see Paul Miller.

Regarding Bill 66, though, we do have some serious concerns about Bill 66 on this side of the Legislature because of what has happened with other pieces of environmental legislation that have come from this government: increased red tape; the loss of local decision-making powers. They are still very much top of mind in Prince Edward–Hastings, because the same decisions that were made when the Green Energy Act was introduced are still haunting the people of Prince Edward county every single day—and not just the people of Prince Edward county but people right across the province, and anybody who opens a hydro bill. The biggest reason that our hydro prices—our electricity prices—in Ontario have gone from the lowest in North America 10 years ago to the highest in North America today is because of the Green Energy Act that was brought in by this government. We worry that Bill 66 could have the same result on our local residents and municipalities.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It's indeed a pleasure to stand in the House this afternoon and speak to G66.

But just before I do, I have to say two things. First, the member from Prince Edward–Hastings was talking about Toronto being different from rural Ontario. Well, on my way home last night—I was here until about 9 o'clock, writing away—as I get close to Bloor and Yonge, I look up and I think I see two cats on a second-floor ledge. I

said, "Gee, that's kind of scary. How did they get out? I don't see an open window." They weren't cats at all; they were raccoons, almost on Yonge Street. So there are parts of urban-rural—there is a connection there.

Just before I continue, Speaker—the member from Essex was talking about going to Quinte in February for ice fishing. I've seen the pictures: He caught pickerel like this. But it pales in comparison to what his wife, Jenny, catches in the Detroit River in the spring. I've seen those pictures too, and Jenny always gets the biggest fish when she's out with the member and her brothers every spring.

Let me get back to G66.

No one seriously should question the need to protect the Great Lakes and the watersheds that flow into the lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway. Ontario borders on four of the five Great Lakes. Some 75% of the people in Ontario get their drinking water from the Great Lakes.

One thing that desperately needs to be changed is legislation that allows companies to take our water for next to nothing and sell it at a profit. Since 1961, companies taking more than 50,000 litres of water per day need a permit. The government collects \$200,000 in annual permit fees from all of these companies put together. But it costs Ontario \$9.5 million a year to monitor and enforce this activity—something wrong with that picture, Speaker.

Water bottling companies—indeed, I think there are 6,000 permit holders—do this, but they have to start paying their own fair share. I'm not saying that some of them don't, but a lot of them do not. Seven years ago, the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario was calling on the government to change this—seven years ago. The Drummond report also recommended it. Changes to this act could make it happen.

We also need to do more to reduce phosphorus levels in our Great Lakes. Phosphorus, nitrogen and manure all lead to algae blooms and threats to our watersheds.

We need to pay more attention to radioactive materials, as the member from Essex just mentioned. The federal plan is to bury this material on the shores of Lake Huron. I've heard the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change say, "I've got to be hands off on this; it's a federal issue." But I believe it's a moral issue for everyone in this House to raise a concern, because if anything ever happened, look at the damage that could be done on both sides of the border. That's why they're so involved with this issue around Michigan. The senators from Michigan, the state legislators from Michigan, the mayors and the councillors from up that way all oppose this idea, yet we're taking a hands-off approach.

I think we need a full environmental assessment before we even consider allowing oil from the Alberta tar sands to be pumped through aging pipelines near our Great Lakes. We need brand new shut-off valves on both sides of any lake, creek, brook or stream that a pipeline would cross.

Our Great Lakes are under constant threat. Purple loosestrife, zebra mussels, phragmites, Asian carp: There's a never-ending cavalcade of threats to our beautiful Great Lakes. These are threats to our drinking water,

our commercial interests, our tourism, our economy and, yes, our property values. We must do more to protect our watersheds and our shoreline green spaces. The green spaces are home to 4,000 species of plants, fish and wildlife.

In my area, Windsor-Tecumseh, we promote the 100 Mile Peninsula as a retirement community. We're nearly surrounded by water, with affordable homes, marinas and waterside golf courses. In 2012, the Liberals said they would put \$52 million in the budget to protect and restore the Great Lakes. It didn't happen. They talked about it, but they didn't come through with the money. We need, as Elvis used to say, a little less conversation and a little more action; or that Cuba Gooding Jr. line from the movie about sports agents, "Show me the money." This is a real issue. It needs serious money, serious targets, serious timelines and a coordinated effort with municipal partners and conservation authorities.

Let's talk about conservation authorities for a moment. There are 36 of them in Ontario, and all but one have watersheds that flow into the Great Lakes. The conservation authorities strongly support this bill. Down in Canada south, where I represent Windsor-Tecumseh, we have the Essex Region Conservation Authority. It was created in 1973, and at that time, the tree cover in Windsor and Essex county was an abysmal 3.5%; actually a little bit less than 3.5%, not quite there. Since then, because of team efforts led by the staff at the conservation authority, we are now at 8.5% natural cover. That's because ERCA has helped plant more than six million trees since 1973—six million, Speaker. This concentrated effort has helped make our watershed a healthier place. It has helped improve the quality of the water and the wetlands, and has helped stop runoff into the Great Lakes.

Now, 8.5% of natural cover is okay—it's nothing great—but it's a heck of a lot better than less than 3.5%. We still have a lot of work to do—we know that—and we are aiming to do much better in the years ahead.

1720

As a city councillor, I certainly enjoyed planting trees each and every year, and always took part whenever I could in the annual cleanup of our waterways, especially around the Little River, which winds through my old municipal wards and now as an important waterway in my provincial riding of Windsor-Tecumseh.

I am so proud to stand here today and say great things about the men and women who work at the Essex Region Conservation Authority. I spent every one of my seven years as a city councillor as a board member of the conservation authority's board of directors. We represented the seven municipalities in Essex county, as well as the folks on Pelee Island and, of course, in the city of Windsor. I served two terms as vice-chair of the conservation authority and really enjoyed my one term as the authority's chair. It was definitely a highlight of my municipal career.

Although I was here last year, let me tell you a couple of the issues that ERCA was dealing with, and of course at the top is that blue-green algae. Speaker, you'll recall,

across Lake Erie, the city of Toledo, Ohio, told residents not to drink the water from their taps for four days. They were in a state of emergency because of that algae. On Pelee Island, Mayor Rick Masse and his councillors instituted a ban on 90% of the island's residents who draw their water from wells. That ban lasted 10 days and all because of this blue-green algae.

Climate change is said to be part of the problem—warmer temperatures and less ice cover during the winter months. More and more people living along the lakes, runoff from parking lots and farmers' fields and increased phosphorus levels—all of these things affect our wetlands, our beaches, the fish, the birds and the other wildlife. This bill will help us protect our Great Lakes, and it is something to be supported.

I saw something recently which really hit home. You know when we talk about fallback plans, a plan B? Well, there is no planet B. This is it, folks. We have to make the best of it. We have to protect our environment. We must protect our Great Lakes.

And let's not fall into that trap of blaming the farmers. I know some people like to point fingers in their direction, but I don't, and I certainly won't. They're as aware of the problem as much as we are, if not more so. They are working on ways to improve their best practices, and we have to support them with those efforts.

Speaker, I met yesterday with my friend Don McCabe. You know him. He's president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. He's a farmer from Lambton county. Don has a doctoral level education in soil genesis and classification from the University of Guelph. He also has a chemistry degree from the University of Western Ontario. He's a leading advocate on environmental farm stewardship. Don is also on the Thames-Sydenham and area source water protection committee.

Don McCabe speaks his mind, as you know, Speaker. We were discussing phosphates and blue-green algae and runoff from farmland as one of the sources of the algae problems in the Great Lakes. Don looks me in the eye and he says, "You know me. I'm tight with a buck. If you think for one moment that I want to see one atom of phosphorus run off of my land after I paid good money for it to fertilize my crops, you got another thought coming." I think that's the way most farmers feel on this issue. Don't be blaming the farmers at all.

Now, let's talk about something that rarely gets mentioned in this chamber: the commercial fishing industry on Lake Erie. I know you're well aware of this, Speaker. It won't surprise you that Lake Erie's commercial fishing and processing industry has an economic impact of more than \$244 million.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Lake Erie perch—they're great.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Well, the perch are okay, but the world's largest freshwater commercial fishing industry is in Wheatley and Kingsville in Chatham—Kent—Essex.

When you break down those numbers of that \$244 million, the commercial fishing boats on Lake Erie, the smallest of the Great Lakes, have an economic benefit of \$50 million, and the other \$194 million comes from the

fish processing industry. Combined, these industries employ more than 900 people directly—1,500 when you count the spinoff jobs—and they bring in an estimated tax revenue to the province of more than \$20 million a year. That is nothing to sneeze at.

Back in the early 1980s, there were more than a dozen processing plants. Consolidation has led to just six these days in the Kingsville-Wheatley area. These plants and boats and the jobs that come with them help diversify the local economy.

This year on Lake Erie, the quota for pickerel or walleye is still more than four million fish a year. That's for both sides of the border, and it includes any caught by folks out with a line and a lure. The quota for yellow perch that the Minister of Agriculture just mentioned—and most of that perch industry is centred around Elgin county. That quota has been cut by about 20% this year.

You may ask, Speaker, who sets these quotas. Well, that's a good question; thank you for asking. Actually, the quotas are set by people who manage the fishery, and not only in Ontario but also in Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania and New York. So when we talk about the need to improve the quality of the Great Lakes, we need to understand that some of the food we enjoy actually comes from these waters: smelt, perch, pickerel, bass, salmon, trout.

Maybe it's because I've spent so much of my time on the east coast of Canada, where many of my friends and family members made a living off the fishery industry in Atlantic Canada, but I have to tell you that when I visit the docks in Wheatley or in Kingsville, when I see the boats, the gear and listen to the gulls screaming above, smell the fish, I feel right at home. I recognize it takes hard work and long hours. The men and women working in the commercial fishing industry on Lake Erie don't get a lot of attention, but we need their labour if we're to enjoy the harvest they bring to our tables.

Now, I talked about Lake Erie being the smallest of the lakes, the shallowest of the lakes, and really, because of the blue-green algae, that makes it the proverbial canary in the mine shaft. Phosphorus is the nutrient that has the most influence on the health of the lakes. You can find it in some detergents, decaying plants, human waste, fertilizer, manure. Sometimes it gets into the Great Lakes from airborne particles or industrial discharges, or when septic systems overflow, and yes, sometimes when it rains and there is runoff from fields that have been fertilized.

Back in the 1960s, Lake Erie was in such a bad state of health, people said it was dying—extensive algae growth, blamed on phosphorus more than anything. By 1972, we came up with the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement between Canada and the United States, and that really helped. But by the mid-1990s, the algae was back and causing problems again. This time, part of the reason was attributed to invasive species. We normally think of zebra mussels, but over time there have been more than 180 aquatic non-native invasive species introduced into the Great Lakes. This throws off the nutrient

balance, and at times we end up with actual mats of floating algae of various blue and green tints. At times, these slimy blobs really stink. They pose problems for swimmers and for those who fish, and they get caught up in propellers. They line the beaches. They are not at all attractive to the tourist trade.

When the algae dies, the mats sink to the bottom of the lake and they decay, which of course depletes the oxygen levels and creates conditions that prove fatal to fish and some aquatic organisms. If it can happen on Lake Erie—like I say, the canary in the mine shaft—it can cause problems in the other Great Lakes as well.

That's one of the major reasons why this bill is so important. We must do whatever it takes to protect the Great Lakes. The nutrient management approaches taken in the 1970s are not necessarily adequate any more. Now we all have a role to play. The zebra mussels aren't going to change their habits, but we can stop using our kitchen sink garburators, for example, and keep that food waste away from the waste water treatment plants.

1730

Most detergents are now phosphate-free, but use phosphate-free or slow-release organic fertilizers on your lawn or in your garden. Keep an eye on the weather. Take a look at the Weather Channel. Don't fertilize if it's going to rain or if it's raining already.

By all means, if you have a septic system at home or at the cottage, keep it clean and maintained. Every little bit helps.

Now, Speaker, I'm not much of a fisherman, but I do enjoy it. The first time I went out on Lake St. Clair pickerel fishing was with a brother-in-law. He showed me how to throw out the line so it was out there. I said, "How do I know when I've caught something?" He said, "You'll feel a tug." I said, "But we're motoring along here. I feel a tug already." He said, "What do you mean? You shouldn't feel anything." I said, "Well, I've got a tug in my line." He said, "Well, reel it in." My first cast out I caught a pickerel. It was only about this big, but I caught one. That was it for the day, but on my first cast, I did catch one.

I'm not much of a sailor, Speaker, but I do enjoy getting out with my friend, my buddy Kim Kristy, who I used to work with at channel 9 in Windsor. He's a big sailor. He's sailed around the world, but he's got a big sailboat docked at Lakeview marina. I get out with him from time to time. There's nothing quite like it when you're out on the lake and you get that spinnaker up there and the sun is setting. It's just a magnificent feeling to enjoy the Great Lakes, a healthy Great Lakes, and the Detroit River and all the little—Lake St. Clair isn't a Great Lake, but it's certainly part of the Great Lakes system, as you know. I'd recommend it to anybody who can get out there.

When I lived in Leamington back in the 1970s, I used to spend a lot of time at Point Pelee National Park, and Pelee Island is just over there as well. When you can enjoy the water and enjoy the Great Lakes, it gives you a feeling of nature and it gives you a sense of wonder when

you're looking up at that beautiful sky, just to enjoy the quality of life that the Great Lakes bring to all of us if we take advantage of it. I just can't see doing anything that would ever harm the future of the Great Lakes.

That's why I'll be supporting this bill and the NDP will be supporting this bill, even though the bill could be improved; don't get me wrong. We need to do everything we can to support the Great Lakes. Let's work on improving the bill, but let's definitely support it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Questions and comments.

Mr. Glenn Thibeault: I'm very pleased to rise and be able to speak to this bill, especially the importance of the Great Lakes to those of here in Ontario and to those of us in northern Ontario that really rely on the Great Lakes. For some of us it's part of our daily lives, and for others it's how they make their living.

I know we've been hearing a lot about how our Great Lakes are currently under stress. We need to ensure that we protect the health of the Great Lakes. I know my honourable colleague from Windsor—Tecumseh talked about blue-green algae in Lake Erie, but we're also seeing that throughout many other of our Great Lakes. We're also seeing increased levels of other harmful pollutants, rising levels of phosphorus, hardened shorelines and invasive species. Over the last 15 years, Mr. Speaker, changes in the Great Lakes have revealed disruptions to the food chain throughout all of them.

Also, climate change, I think, is an important piece to mention. It's also challenging the ability of the Great Lakes to be resilient to the problems that can arise from severe weather and changes in the thaw-and-freeze cycle. Something that I know we rely on often in northern Ontario is the Chi-Cheemaun. It's a great tourist attraction for those of us in the north, and many folks from southern Ontario use that to come up to the north. One year, it was, I think, a few weeks before the Chi-Cheemaun could get out because of water levels.

Mr. Speaker, looking at the importance of protecting the Great Lakes, it truly is vitally important to the people of Ontario to protect the Great Lakes, not only for our drinking water, but also for our quality of life and prosperity. We need to restore them now to continue to enjoy their benefits for this and future generations. That's why this is a very good bill with good policy to protect our Great Lakes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I'm pleased to rise and share some comments on Bill 66.

I think my colleague from the Windsor area nailed a lot of important issues right on the head, but we need to be mindful of the fact that we do not need added layers of bureaucracy. The PC Party of Ontario—we do care about the Great Lakes; we do want to protect them, but we want to protect them in a manner that does not introduce yet more layers of bureaucracy that rip away local autonomy and add more concern in terms of how, where and particularly why decisions are being made.

We have six particular issues that we want considered when we're debating Bill 66. They reflect the manner in which we want to protect our Great Lakes. First and foremost, we saw where this government went off the rails specifically with regard to the Great Lakes Protection Act in 2009. We're adamant that going forward, in no way should further autonomy be ripped away from municipal councils. We're going to stand very firmly on that. That's an issue with this bill that we recognize.

Another issue with this bill is the lack of funding details. They're talking about proposing geographically focused initiatives but absolutely have not attached any dollars or even hinted at where this money is going to come from. We are afraid that after years of downloading on municipal governments, if a geographically focused initiative is defined for a certain municipality, they are probably going to get left holding that particular bag.

With regard to redundancy, we need to apply the rural lens that the Premier referenced during the ROMA convention. She spoke about it at least three times. I can tell you, from doing my research, there are approximately 20 acts and agreements that are going to be impacted by this in terms of redundancy.

This is not a good bill. We need to be leaner and meaner and allow our municipalities to be effective in their own locations.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to be able to stand in this House and to follow the member from Windsor—Tecumseh on his comments regarding Bill 66, the Great Lakes Protection Act.

I listened intently, in particular to his comments regarding Don McCabe, the president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. As a farmer, I think all farmers are worried about their bottom line, but they're also worried about the environment because it's their job to not only be stewards of their own local environment, but of the greater environment.

One issue that a lot of people are missing with the Great Lakes act—and we support the act—people are focusing on the shores of the Great Lakes, but it's the Great Lakes basin, and that goes right up to the Arctic watershed. Why that's important is because to make acts, to make laws work, you have to have full buy-in from all the participants. Just making regulations that sound good here in this hallowed hall but that maybe don't make sense to people in the country, or just don't make sense, isn't actually going to protect anything.

We always have to be cognizant that we don't just create regulation for the sake of regulation. We're not anti-regulation; there is a role for good regulation. There is a problem when you create regulation on top of regulation. That's a big problem. I think this government has to be very cognizant that when it proceeds with this bill, which we support, the regulations that will be created to support this bill actually make sense along the shorelines of the Great Lakes, but also along the tributaries that flow into the Great Lakes, and that they

actually protect the environment and the socio-economic values of the people who live in the country.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Mr. Speaker, I just want to make two very significant points here. One is, this is not a layer of bureaucracy, no more than our source water protection committees are bureaucracy. This is the guardian council. These are voluntary collaborative organizations that really convene and bring people together and I think will be as successful as that source water protection. That's important because, really, what it is is trying to voluntarily break down silos to get people to work together.

The second point I want to make is, one of the things that I've realized is that we need a heck of a lot more research in Canada in the areas of the environment and agriculture. It has become very corporatized. One of the things that we're working on best right now is science.

1740

Some of the questions we should be asking ourselves about the Great Lakes are: What is the level and volume of pharmaceuticals in there? What do we need to know about their impacts? Neurotoxic systemic pesticides, according to Quebec, are present in all 20 rivers in Quebec at much higher levels than is safe. The same study by the University of Saskatchewan showed the same problem in all water bodies in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Our ministry just started doing that research last year, really for the first time at that level.

Acidification levels are destroying daphnia, microorganisms and that. What's the level of acidification right now within the watersheds of the Great Lakes? Blue-green algae, water temperatures—and what are the tipping points that would allow the putrefaction that did things like shut down Toledo's water supply? Invasive species at the microorganism level do that.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Agricultural runoff.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: We have nutrient runoff now, not because of bad practices by farmers but because of much more abrupt, extreme, intense rains that are really making obsolete—we do not have a state-of-the-art understanding of water systems anywhere in Canada right now. We don't have national leadership. But what this act will do is it will start to give us the evidence to answer the questions we need to make vital public policy decisions about the future of our lakes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Oh, that was it? Sorry; forgive me. Back to the member from Windsor—Tecumseh.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you to those who commented on my presentation: the member from Sudbury, who talked about the blue-green algae up his way and the effect that will have on tourism in the lakes and rivers; the member for Huron—Bruce, who talked about the bureaucracy and the lack of funding that has been

attached to this bill so far; and the member for Timiskaming-Cochrane, who talked about the Great Lakes basin and that it's so important—we can never forget it. It goes all the way up to the far north. The tributaries that flow into the Great Lakes are just as important as the waterways and the shorelines.

To my friend the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, who, I guess, toned down the criticism about the bureaucracy attached to this and compared it to source water protection committees—I know there are many people out there who do have concerns about funding, about where we go for funding for the source water protection committees that have been attached to the various conservation authorities, and where we go from here now that the reports have been in.

I do want to mention one good part of all of this. A few years ago, Fighting Island, off of the town of LaSalle in the riding of Essex, was pretty well a desolate place. BASF used to dump some bad stuff there, but then they turned it around and started restoring it, and the island is now a green space. Just off the island itself, a few years ago, agencies on both sides of the border got together and put in a new breeding habitat for Great Lakes sturgeon, and the sturgeon are back now. I know you know that sturgeon are like prehistoric fish—they're not the prettiest fish that we have—but the sturgeon are coming back in the Great Lakes, and it's because of the restoration efforts put on by the Essex Region Conservation Authority and the various ministries and state agencies on both sides of the border. So we can improve what has gone into disrepair in the past.

Thank you for your time this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate?

M. Jeff Yurek: Merci, Speaker—Mr. President; excusez-moi.

M. Gilles Bisson: C'est « monsieur le Président ».

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Je suis très heureux de parler du projet de loi 66, mais maintenant je vais parler en anglais.

I'm glad to speak to Bill 66. Our caucus has been talking about six points that either we'd like to see added to the bill or how we would actually try to manage the Great Lakes. Coming from an area in Ontario which sits right upon Lake Erie, I know how important the Great Lakes are and the watershed surrounding the area. Port Stanley is one of our main ports in the area; I'm quite proud of the beach that we have. It's actually a UN-sanctioned blue-flag beach. It meets all the special qualifications to become one of those beaches. The fact that there's a beach in South Africa that has the same designation is not well known around Ontario—the fact that we have a high-quality beach in Ontario, let alone in Elgin county, right on Port Stanley's main beach.

I'd also mention that we have a few other villages along the Lake Erie shoreline: Port Bruce, Port Burwell, which has the Ojibwa submarine sitting there, a great place to come and tour. I know it's going through some financial difficulties right now, but it's still open for business. My invitation to each and every MPP in this

Legislature holds true. If you do want to tour the submarine, bring your family down. I'll arrange a private tour for you, and you'll get to meet and talk with the museum people, have your own special one-on-one. You'll get to see a post-World War II submarine that the Canadian government sold to the Elgin County Military Museum.

At the far end, we have Port Glasgow, right on the borderline near your riding, Mr. Speaker. Port Glasgow has a great fish fry in the summertime that I attend and has an excellent port there for ships, boats and sailboats to go out and enjoy the waters.

They are in the midst of creating their own new development, which, if it gets by the Endangered Species Act—they found a milk snake that was dead; they haven't been able to find another one in the area. It has been three or four years now, a \$200-million development project, waiting on a milk snake that they found dead, and they haven't been able to find another one. I'm hoping the government can get under way and allow this development to go forward and really be a boon to west Elgin and nearby Chatham-Kent.

Mr. Speaker, we had a few of our points. One was about local autonomy, and we're quite strong on this point. Many of our ridings in rural Ontario on the PC caucus side are areas that have been stripped of their own autonomy, and in fact, when it comes to wind turbines, we have no say. Currently, in the western part of my riding, west Elgin and the Dutton Dunwich area, there are plans to construct industrial wind turbines. The funny thing is, Dutton Dunwich municipal council did a survey of the residents of the area, and 80% of the people responded saying they don't want the wind turbines. Even council has put forth a motion stating they do not want the wind turbines in their area. However, due to the Green Energy Act, the fact is, there's nothing they can do about them. They're coming. Whether they want them or not, they will be there. That, of course, was stripped away from them by the Green Energy Act. There's fear that with this Great Lakes Protection Act, local autonomy will again be diminished, as this act will override other acts that give people their local say.

I'm just going to quickly go to a news article because a constituent of mine, Mark Wales—I know the opposite side of the House knows Mark. Mark was the OFA president for a number of years. He's also a councillor in Malahide township. I talk to Mark quite often; he's quite knowledgeable on agricultural issues, and I like to get his feedback. He was speaking in Better Farming, and he had this to say with regard to the Great Lakes Protection Act:

“Wales says the agricultural sector must ensure stricter rules governing farmers' operations aren't introduced as part of the Great Lakes protection bill.

“‘We support the government's initiatives to help clean up the Great Lakes plus the St. Lawrence River,’ he adds. ‘We live here, we use the water and we want to make sure that everything that can be done reasonably is done’ to clean and protect the lakes.

“But ‘we have to continue to be able to farm and we have to do it in a sustainable manner,’ he notes.”

It goes on, “Wales says agriculture definitely must be represented on the council”—we’re talking about these guardian councils that will be created—“since we own 80% of the privately-held land in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin watershed.”

“Moreover, the government says in its release more than 95% of Ontario’s agricultural land is in the Great Lakes basin.

“Wales adds ‘you always have to worry about if a council like that will set policy, but I don’t see that in the (bill).’

“One idea Wales has previously suggested to the environment ministry is to have four councils rather than just one. The councils would be for each of the four Great Lakes within Canada’s jurisdiction—Ontario, Erie, Huron and Superior.

“Four councils would be better because ‘people who are very strong on the issues on one lake don’t necessarily understand the issues on another lake,’ ...

“Wales says the bill enables qualitative and quantitative targets to be set. But the industry needs to know more about these.” We need to know what the targets are going to be so we can actually measure and see if this bill is having an impact on our lakes.

1750

Mr. Speaker, that is the concern about the local autonomy, which brings a good segue into the guardian councils that are going forward. If we look at the guardian councils that the ministry wants to create, it kind of brings me to my role as the MNR critic with regard to the fishing management zones. A few years back, I think around 2007, 2008—I could be off a year or two—the government changed the councils that used to oversee areas of angling in our province into fishing management zones. Each area was designated—I think there are quite a few, some 20-odd fishing management zones. There might be a few more than that.

Anyway, I’m focusing on fishing management zone 16. I’ve got the Ontario fishing regulations that the government prints out. Unfortunately, they don’t print enough in this province, which is quite a problem for people who want to go out fishing. They can’t necessarily get the coverage on their cellphone to download the regulations when they need to look at them. My office does print up some for my constituents because I know the government is failing in their obligation to present these regulations to the anglers of our province.

I look at fishing management zone 16. These have been in existence, as I said, since 2007, 2008, 2009—one of those years. Anyway, we’re looking at seven or eight years since these management zones were created—probably much like the guardian councils that are going to be created. However, fishing management zone 16 doesn’t exist. I’ve asked the natural resources ministry staff why this doesn’t exist. “We don’t know how to create it” is the response—if I had a way to create the zone, let them know it and they’ll do it. It has been eight years. They came up with this idea to create these zones, but they can’t create the council. I’m looking at the size of the area—it goes from Windsor all the way up to Lake

Simcoe and everything in between. So you’ve got all of Lake Erie, Lake Huron, most of Georgian Bay, and they can’t create this management zone. I don’t know how they expect to create the Great Lakes Guardians’ Council when their own co-ministry next door to them can’t create a smaller council at the same time.

Right now, in my area where I live, where you live, where quite a bit of the members of the Legislature are living, if you have a problem or you have an idea that you want to bring forth to the Ministry of Natural Resources to improve angling, you can’t. There’s no council. The reason for these councils is—they’re the buffer between the government and the anglers, so that ideas or problems or projects that they’d like to take on can be taken to this council and decided on. So my concern being the fact that this guardians’ council, which is going to add red tape and remove autonomy from local areas—the fact that I’m not even clear that they’ll be able to create these councils, because if they are able to do so, I don’t know why they’re not sharing that information with the Minister of Natural Resources so that they can actually finish up their duties and create the fishing management zone in southwestern Ontario and go forward.

Also, there’s no funding model for this act, and again, I’m going to relate to it my portfolio, with the Invasive Species Act. We’ve pointed out that there are a few problems in the Invasive Species Act, but we’re generally supportive of it. However, in talking with a lot of the conservation authorities, their concern is, and my concern is, that once this bill is passed, there’s no funding behind the Invasive Species Act for them to actually carry out their duties to get rid of invasive species in this province.

The same holds true for the Great Lakes Protection Act. How can we see any results going forward once they pass this legislation? I know many people have said that it’s photo op legislation; it’s an opportunity to have headlines about cleaning up the Great Lakes. Who wouldn’t want the clean up the Great Lakes? But if there’s no funding behind the plan, we don’t know how it’s going to be achieving their goals. We’d definitely like to take a look three years down the road and take a review of what passes through this Great Lakes Protection Act, how the guardian councils are functioning, if at all, and what the end goals are that we want to obtain. Like Mark Wales said earlier, we need to know what the quantitative and qualitative goals are at the end of the day. Unfortunately, that is not coming to light.

We also made mention of industrial wind turbines. We definitely want to make sure that local municipalities have their say back. Some areas want industrial turbines; I haven’t met too many. Although I will say that before the Green Energy Act, in east Elgin in my riding, Port Burwell, as you mentioned earlier, erected wind turbines—not the monsters we have today, but the first generation of them. They did it to help stir their economy. But it was a municipal decision. It was decided upon by the people. That’s okay in my books.

I don’t like the subsidies. I don’t think we need the subsidies for that; it just adds cost to our entire system. But let the municipalities have their say.

This is an opportunity for the government, through this bill, to amend the acts to ensure that local decision-making returns to municipalities. Those who want the wind turbines can have them, and those who do not want them don't have to have them.

We talk about respect for landowners. I guess it mirrors the Invasive Species Act as it stands now. We will have amendments to try to change it otherwise, but I don't think that any government official should have the right to enter anybody's property without permission at any time, unless they have a warrant. The Great Lakes Protection Act and the Invasive Species Act remove that right, other than entering their home, I guess—at this point in time. But I imagine, coming down the road later, that this government will introduce legislation that will allow the government to enter anybody's home, should they see fit. I imagine that's not far down the road.

The other aspect that we want to take a look at is the fact that we need to ensure that changes being made to the Great Lakes are seen through the rural lens to ensure that people living in rural Ontario have a say and that decisions aren't based solely out of Toronto. I think that's quite important because there are two different kinds of people who live in this province: those in cities and those outside of cities. At the end of the day, we both want a healthy, safe Ontario, but we get there in two different ways.

As the time ticks and we're getting closer, I just wanted to mention nutrient runoff. I hear a lot today about the farmers being the bad guys. I'll tell you right now: The farmers in Ontario are doing their best to eliminate nutrient runoff on their properties a lot with not tilling their property, although with the neonic ban coming forward you'll see more tilling on the property and probably nutrient runoff.

But let's not forget municipalities and their sewage overflows and runoffs that are running into our streams and rivers, which flow into our lakes; there's also a nutrient problem. The Americans, with their lax agricultural laws, could be a problem. In fact, look at the developments that are going forward. When a developer is going to build a new subdivision, the first thing they do is take off all the topsoil and just place a little bit on the ground when they build their houses, which is hard and not soluble to let the water soak into the ground; instead, it runs off into the sewage system, carrying a lot of nutrients. You just can't put all the blame on the farmers,

and I hope the government is not meaning to do so with a lot of the comments I've heard today. We have to look at the other problems that are going forward.

I'm getting the "tick-tock, hurry up."

Interjection.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: The House leader, the minister of the Blue Jays, wants me to continue speaking, Speaker, so I think I'll just continue on.

Anyway, thank you very much for the opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I'd like to thank the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London. You will have an opportunity to finish up at a later point in time.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

ROYAL ASSENT SANCTION ROYALE

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Before we adjourn this evening, I do have a very important announcement that I would like to make. I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to assent to certain bills in her office.

The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker): The following are the titles of the bills to which Her Honour did assent:

An Act to proclaim Christmas Tree Day / Loi proclamant le Jour de l'arbre de Noël.

An Act to require a provincial framework and action plan concerning vector-borne diseases / Loi exigeant un cadre et un plan d'action provinciaux concernant les maladies à transmission vectorielle.

An Act to amend the Highway 407 East Act, 2012 and the Highway Traffic Act in respect of various matters and to make a consequential amendment to the Provincial Offences Act / Loi modifiant la Loi de 2012 sur l'autoroute 407 Est et le Code de la route en ce qui concerne diverses questions et apportant une modification corrélative à la Loi sur les infractions provinciales.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): It is now 6 o'clock, and this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1800.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiles, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cookville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
		Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
		Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vermile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
		Premier / Première ministre
		Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Vacant
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo
Han Dong, Michael Harris
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala
Monique Taylor
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson
Mike Colle, Grant Crack
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przedziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Fraser
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins
Jim McDonnell, Randy Pettapiece
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przedziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadi
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadi
Todd Smith
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Han Dong, John Fraser
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile
Bill Walker
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott
Han Dong, Sylvia Jones
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFFÉRÉS

Order of business

Motion, as amended, agreed to4837

Transportation Statute Law Amendment Act

(Making Ontario's Roads Safer), 2015, Bill 31,
Mr. Del Duca / Loi de 2015 modifiant des lois en ce
qui concerne le transport (accroître la sécurité
routière en Ontario), projet de loi 31, M. Del Duca
Third reading agreed to4837

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Hon. Bob Chiarelli4837

Ms. Sarah Campbell4837

Mr. Chris Ballard4837

Annual report, Integrity Commissioner

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac)4838

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

Victims' services of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex

Mr. Monte McNaughton4838

Labour disputes

Ms. Cindy Forster4838

Italian Heritage Month

Mr. Chris Ballard4838

Ontario craft cider

Ms. Sylvia Jones4838

Anniversary of attack on the Golden Temple

Mr. Jagmeet Singh4839

Violence against aboriginal women

Mr. Glenn Thibeault4839

Almonte General Hospital

Mr. Jack MacLaren4839

Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan

Ms. Sophie Kiwala4839

IRONdames

Ms. Eleanor McMahon4840

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES / RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS

Standing Committee on Government Agencies

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac)4840

Report deemed adopted4840

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Mr. Ernie Hardeman4840

Debate adjourned4840

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Mr. Ernie Hardeman4840

Debate adjourned4841

Standing Committee on Social Policy

Mr. Peter Tabuns4841

Report adopted4841

Standing Committee on General Government

Mr. Grant Crack4841

Report adopted4841

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

Growing Ontario's Craft Cider Industry Act, 2015, Bill 110, Ms. Jones, Mr. Potts / Loi de 2015 sur la croissance de l'industrie du cidre artisanal de

l'Ontario, projet de loi 110, Mme Jones, M. Potts

First reading agreed to4841

Ms. Sylvia Jones4841

Ending Predatory Electricity Retailing Act, 2015, Bill 111, Ms. Campbell / Loi de 2015 sur

l'élimination des prix abusifs dans la vente au

détail d'électricité, projet de loi 111,

Mme Campbell

First reading agreed to4842

Ms. Sarah Campbell4842

Strengthening Consumer Protection and Electricity System Oversight Act, 2015, Bill 112, Mr. Chiarelli

/ Loi de 2015 pour renforcer la protection des

consommateurs et la surveillance du réseau

d'électricité, projet de loi 112, M. Chiarelli

First reading agreed to4842

Hon. Bob Chiarelli4842

MOTIONS

Rainbow flag

Hon. James J. Bradley4842

Motion agreed to4842

Pan Am Games flags

Hon. James J. Bradley4842

Motion agreed to4843

Consideration of Bill 16

Hon. James J. Bradley4843

Motion agreed to4843

Christmas Tree Day Act, 2015, Bill 16, Mr. Wilson / Loi de 2015 sur le Jour de l'arbre de Noël, projet

de loi 16, M. Wilson

Second reading agreed to4843

Christmas Tree Day Act, 2015, Bill 16, Mr. Wilson / Loi de 2015 sur le Jour de l'arbre de Noël, projet de loi 16, M. Wilson	
Third reading agreed to	4843

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Curling	
Mr. Randy Pettapiece	4843
Installations scolaires	
M. Taras Natyshak	4843
Lung health	
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry.....	4844
Off-road vehicles	
Mr. Norm Miller	4844
Environmental protection	
Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	4844
Water fluoridation	
Mr. Grant Crack	4845
Hospice funding	
Mr. Jim Wilson	4845
Hospital funding	
Ms. Sarah Campbell.....	4845
Credit unions	
Mrs. Cristina Martins	4845
Family Responsibility Office	
Mr. Jeff Yurek.....	4846
Privatization of public assets	
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	4846
Provincial Framework and Action Plan concerning Emerging Vector-Borne Diseases Act, 2015, Bill 27, Mr. Barrett / Loi de 2015 sur le cadre et le plan d'action provinciaux concernant les maladies à	

transmission vectorielle émergentes, projet de loi 27, M. Barrett	
Third reading agreed to	4846

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Building Ontario Up Act (Budget Measures), 2015, Bill 91, Mr. Sousa / Loi de 2015 pour favoriser l'essor de l'Ontario (mesures budgétaires), projet de loi 91, M. Sousa	
Hon. Charles Sousa	4847
Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	4848
Ms. Catherine Fife.....	4850
Third reading vote deferred.....	4854
Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015, Bill 66, Mr. Murray / Loi de 2015 sur la protection des Grands Lacs, projet de loi 66, M. Murray	
Mr. Todd Smith	4854
Mr. Jagmeet Singh	4857
Hon. Jeff Leal.....	4857
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson	4857
Mr. Taras Natyshak	4858
Mr. Todd Smith.....	4858
Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	4858
Mr. Glenn Thibeault.....	4861
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson	4861
Mr. John Vanthof.....	4862
Hon. Glen R. Murray.....	4862
Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	4862
Mr. Jeff Yurek.....	4863
Second reading debate deemed adjourned	4865
Royal assent / Sanction royale	
The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker).....	4865

CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Tuesday 2 June 2015 / Mardi 2 juin 2015

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015, Bill 73, Mr. McMeekin / Loi de 2015 pour une croissance intelligente de nos collectivités, projet de loi 73, M. McMeekin

Mr. Ernie Hardeman	4815
Mr. Jagmeet Singh	4819
Mr. Lou Rinaldi	4819
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson	4820
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong	4820
Mr. Ernie Hardeman	4820
Mr. Percy Hatfield	4821
Second reading debate deemed adjourned	4825

Wearing of pins

Hon. Mario Sergio	4825
-------------------------	------

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Jeff Yurek	4825
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn	4825
Mr. Robert Bailey	4825
Hon. Jeff Leal	4825
Mr. Randy Pettapiece	4825
Mr. Bob Delaney	4825
Mme Gila Martow	4826
Ms. Ann Hoggarth	4826
Ms. Sylvia Jones	4826
Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde	4826
Mr. Monte McNaughton	4826
Mr. Rick Nicholls	4826
Mr. Norm Miller	4826
Miss Monique Taylor	4826
Mr. Gilles Bisson	4826
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac)	4826

ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

Ontario Retirement Pension Plan

Mr. Jim Wilson	4826
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4826
Mrs. Julia Munro	4826
Hon. Mitzie Hunter	4827

Ontario Retirement Pension Plan

Mr. Jim Wilson	4827
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4827
Mr. Ted Arnott	4827
Hon. Mitzie Hunter	4828

Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath	4828
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4828

Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath	4829
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4829

Bear control

Mr. Jeff Yurek	4830
Hon. Bill Mauro	4830

Ontario Energy Board

Mr. Peter Tabuns	4831
Hon. Bob Chiarelli	4831

Aboriginal affairs / Affaires autochtones

M. John Fraser	4831
Hon. David Zimmer	4831

Privatization of public assets

Mr. Steve Clark	4832
Hon. Bob Chiarelli	4832

Class size

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky	4833
Hon. Liz Sandals	4833

Manufacturing sector

Mr. Lou Rinaldi	4833
Hon. Brad Duguid	4833

Teachers' labour disputes

Mr. Garfield Dunlop	4834
Hon. Liz Sandals	4834

TVO documentary

Mr. Jagmeet Singh	4834
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4834

Mining industry

Mr. Glenn Thibeault	4835
Hon. Michael Gravelle	4835

Éducation en français / French-language education

Mme Gila Martow	4835
Hon. Liz Sandals	4836

Visitors

Hon. Steven Del Duca	4836
Mr. Yvan Baker	4836

Continued on inside back cover

CAZON
X1
-D23



No. 92

N° 92

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

First Session, 41st Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Première session, 41^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Wednesday 3 June 2015

Mercredi 3 juin 2015



Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Greffière
Deborah Deller

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 3 June 2015

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 3 juin 2015

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GREAT LAKES PROTECTION ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA PROTECTION DES GRANDS LACS

Resuming the debate adjourned on June 2, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin / Projet de loi 66, Loi visant la protection et le rétablissement du bassin des Grands Lacs et du fleuve Saint-Laurent.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further debate? The member for Elgin—Middlesex—London.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Speaker, I'm glad to come back and finish the debate I started last night. I only have a few minutes left, and I hope to just review what I spoke about for the last 15 minutes in the House. That's basically discussing that this legislation, unless fully utilized and brought out to the people of Ontario, might only amount to photo op legislation, where the government can pass this bill, have the Great Lakes Protection Act, get a good photo with it and make the headlines. As we've seen with other bills this government has brought forward, there's usually no action after instituting them. I'm hoping that we can look back at this bill three years down the road and see some tangible results, instead of it just being passed at one part of this year.

As my constituent Mark Wales has said, we need qualitative and quantitative end points so that we can look back and see how we've achieved this. I've outlined the fact about the funding model that isn't present to ensure that some of these initiatives go forward. I refer back to the Invasive Species Act where, in speaking with many conservation authorities throughout the province in my critic portfolio, they're concerned that no money is going to follow the Invasive Species Act. While the powers might be there to deal with invasive species, there's no funding to actually carry through and deal with much of the invasive species that the conservation authorities are looking to deal with, especially in my area near Long Point, where phragmites has basically taken over the entire area that was once a beautiful place to go duck

hunting. They had a great habitat for ducks to come, but unfortunately the phragmites is slowly just diminishing the habitat.

There was a bit of talk on the other side of the House about nutrient runoff, mainly blaming the farmers of this province, that I'd also like to quickly talk about. That's kind of concerning, considering these guardians' councils are supposed to be composed and decide what's going to go on around the Great Lakes. We need to ensure that farmers are adequately represented on these councils, because you can't just blame the farmers for nutrient runoff. They're trying to do their part with improving their farming practices to minimize nutrient runoff. In particular, they usually have moved away from tilling the property, which greatly enhances the maintenance of nutrients in the soil. However, with the neonic ban coming forward from this government, you might see that practice diminish and therefore increase the nutrient runoff.

However, we've got to look at other sources of nutrient runoff in this province. As I mentioned before, when developers come in and build a new subdivision, the first thing they do is take away all the good soil on top of the land, build their subdivision and then only replace a small amount, which prevents proper runoff of rainwater, in washing their lawns, because the ground underneath is usually clay, and it doesn't soak in quite well. So you'll see a lot of the nutrients that they do put on with fertilizers and such run right off into the catch basins, into our water systems and out into the lakes.

We also have to look at municipalities and ensure that their sewage treatment facilities are on par and working well. Too often you might see a bad rainfall, or flooding in some instances, that overruns sewage maintenance plants and unfortunately ends up in our lakes and streams, causing quite a bit of the increased nutrients in our Great Lakes.

Of course, we've got the Americans on the other side of the border, who have their own farming practices that aren't as superb as the ones in Ontario.

In culmination of all the various items I have mentioned, you can't just blame the Ontario farmer. I would hope that the government moves away from focusing on the Ontario farmer. They are the economic engine of this province; the only industry that seems to be able to make a go of it at this point in time. Particularly in my riding, they are definitely keeping our area employed, per se, as they are the ones who are able to buy new trucks and equipment and spend money in the cities, because this government hasn't found a way to destroy their industry yet, although I'm sure they're looking to do so.

As I said earlier, just to recap: the funding model is not there; there's no local autonomy being returned to the municipalities—we'd like to see them stop putting up industrial wind turbines without the permission of local municipalities; there's no respect for landowners—being able to go on anybody's property without a warrant is a slippery slope to head down; again, I mentioned the guardians' council—the Ministry of Natural Resources can't even form a fishing management zone council over the last seven years. Zone 16 is still unformed, per se. It's a smaller council than the Great Lakes council.

I look forward to questions and comments.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'm pleased to respond to the member from Elgin—Middlesex—London. I was in the House last night, and I heard him do the first 15 minutes. He was quite articulate and touched on a lot of issues that I think we share, in terms of our concerns about this bill.

The member and I also share close geographic locations. He's in Elgin—Middlesex—London; I'm in Essex—a lot of rural agricultural land. We are adjacent to Lake Erie, and so we understand the complexities of living near a lake and also living in a very high density of farmland. We have to understand and know the impacts this bill potentially could have on our agriculture community. That's why, as New Democrats, we've called for this bill to not only have broad consultation, given that it is broad in its scope and far-reaching, but also to travel this bill to all quadrants of the province so that we have good information from those who will be impacted by the bill and we can collect the right amount of data.

0910

Last night, I heard the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change talk about the fact that this will be a mechanism to collect further data and to address some of the issues related to climate change and to new processes coming about, whether they be industrial or agricultural, and to ensure that we can mitigate against those processes and ensure the protection of the Great Lakes. Now, that's all well and good; however, if we don't have the resources tied to this bill—meaning money, frankly—then our fear is that it won't have the desired effect and certainly won't carry the protection that the title of the bill states.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Hon. James J. Bradley: I enjoyed the remarks of the member because he wove into his speech the fact that it has implications for his particular riding. I think, ultimately, all of us look to our own ridings, first of all, when legislation is passed and ask, "What kind of effect would this have?" I would recommend that he consult with Yvonne Harris, who is a well-known spokesperson in his riding on matters related to the Legislative Assembly. She will see her name now in Hansard and be pleased with that.

We have to look at all of the sources. I think the member is correct in saying, "Don't concentrate on just

one source or another." There are significant sources everywhere. But governments, and particularly environment departments, wherever the jurisdiction happens to be, must be prepared to take significant action, because those who do reside on Lake Erie, for instance, in the case the member mentioned—when you have Lake Erie nearby, you know the problem that the algae is having along there. It's not just the odour and the look of it, which is very unattractive, but it's the fact that it can become quite toxic as well.

So looking for all ways to be able to deal with this is important. The Great Lakes, as we know, are a real gem that we share with the United States. They're exceedingly important. We've made some progress over the years in terms of the cleanup, but population increases new substances that are introduced to it. When this bill was introduced a few years ago now, it seems to me, when I happened to be Minister of the Environment, we were looking at all of those opportunities to deal with this.

I think the comments of all members of the House have been valuable in dealing with this particular piece of legislation, and I thank the member for his contribution.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Jim McDonell: It's always great to hear my colleague get up and talk about some of the real issues. It's funny; I've been here going on four years. We see legislation go through. I think that summing it up as just another opportunity for a photo op is kind of interesting, but that seems to be what it is. They have something that they talk about as being so important, but there's no funding in it, so what are the real plans?

My riding runs along the St. Lawrence. We have five or six water treatment plants that draw their water from the St. Lawrence River in our area, so water is very important.

But it is also a collaborative affair. We're one of many jurisdictions on the water, on the Great Lakes, that have an input, but certainly, the neighbours to the south—we have committees where they're already involved, and I wonder if it wouldn't be better to work more with that instead of just forming another committee to look after the Great Lakes. How many applications and how many expert panels do you have?

I was somewhat surprised when my colleague talked about the possibility of not having an agricultural rep on it, but I guess when you look at the track record of this government, there's good reason why the agricultural community is somewhat concerned that they won't have a rep on it. They get mentioned many times as being one of the causes, although when you drive along the Great Lakes, you see many good farms being bulldozed and houses being put up, so I don't know if you look at the total picture. Really, the impact of agriculture—agriculture is a green industry, and it's probably our number one industry. I think that if you are going to go with a guardians' council, they should be a very big part of it, in a percentage that's reflective of the industry and the impact they have on it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to stand in this House, and to follow today the comments by the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London and his take on Bill 66. I had the opportunity to listen, both this morning and to the first part. He brought up a lot of concerns about agriculture, and they were valid concerns.

We're in favour of this bill, but this bill has the potential, depending on how it's handled, of being a photo op and window dressing, or being a good bill, or being a devastating bill for agriculture, depending on how it's interpreted and on how the government actually uses it.

I've heard a lot of other members speak about how their ridings are close to the Great Lakes, but this bill covers the Great Lakes basin. That's 95% of the agricultural land in Ontario. This bill covers the majority of my riding, and I'm six hours straight north. Eight hours straight north of here: This bill covers it. So it's a very important bill for agriculture, depending on how it's implemented.

I've seen some of the press releases, and reading the bill—sometimes they're acting like this is the first step to protect the Great Lakes, and that's patently untrue. Specifically, the agriculture sector has been working for years with the government—with various governments—to do their part to protect the environment, and specifically the Great Lakes, with nutrient management plans. Most farmers have environmental farm plans. We have to be crystal clear that those are taken into account, and that they're not simply superseded when someone comes up with a bright new idea out of nowhere, and thinks they're going to solve all the problems. That's where this bill is dangerous. We have to make sure that the regulations under this bill actually make sense for the industry.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Elgin–Middlesex–London has two minutes.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I'd like to thank everyone who commented on my remarks.

The member from Essex—I had a tour of Pelee Island, down in his area, just a few months ago. It's a great place to visit. The fishing industry in that area is quite concerned about the health of the Great Lakes; it does affect them. I know that you've talked about your pickerel and walleye up north, but I do want to mention that the perch out of Lake Erie is probably some of the best fish I've ever had. We have a great time in our riding, enjoying our perch fish fries.

Thanks to the deputy House leader for his remarks.

Members from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and Timiskaming–Cochrane, thank you very much. I appreciate your comments.

The Great Lakes Protection Act is a great title for this bill. However, we've got to ensure that it's definitely a bill that's actually going to do something other than create a photo op for this government. We do have to remember, when they create these local councils to oversee areas—these guardians' councils—the fact that this bill is giving them the power to supersede so many other laws in

our area, including planning bylaws. This could actually affect the development of certain cities and areas, which we do have to be concerned about. Hopefully, these guardians' councils do not become like the LHINs have become in our health care system, where they're these far-off groups of people who are making decisions about health care.

On our local LHIN, one person out of all of Elgin county is the voice for the people of our area with local health care concerns. They're not in touch with the people of this riding; they don't have their finger on the pulse. They're basically just doing what the government's bidding is. Hopefully, the guardians' councils that this government is going to create, which are going to supersede so many bills and regulations and laws, don't become that model.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Good morning to all my colleagues. I'm really happy to have the opportunity to speak to this bill. I obviously represent the riding of Essex, which borders Lake Erie, one of our Great Lakes. Also, in the north end of the riding, we have Lake St. Clair, a wonderful, beautiful lake that is fed through the St. Clair River into the Detroit River. It contains some of the most beautiful scenery, exciting fishing opportunities and water sports opportunities.

0920

I grew up in Belle River and I was always drawn to the water. Even though we didn't live on the water, I was drawn there. As a kid it was where I sought—not refuge, but my entertainment. Many of my friends, we would go fishing and swimming and skiing and do all the other great things that living around a lake affords. It's something that you develop a deep understanding about in terms of how important it is to protect that natural resource.

We knew that we gained our drinking water from the lake. We had economic opportunities—seeing the freighters roll through the Detroit River coming and parking in front of the Windsor Salt mine to send salt around the world.

So, Speaker, we understand and are connected, certainly, with our Great Lakes system—all the more reason to ensure that we, as legislators, do everything that we can do to protect its health and its use and maintain a healthy environment for those who use the Great Lakes and live around the Great Lakes.

It's been said in this House that, of the 107 ridings that we have represented in the Legislature here, there will be four that aren't directly affected by this bill, meaning, I would imagine, that they aren't a part of a watershed system. It's interesting—

Mr. John Vanthof: I wonder which four.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I wonder which four.

It just goes to show you, Speaker, that this is far-reaching in its implementation.

Here are some stats on the Great Lakes for members' information.

The Great Lakes contain nearly 20% of the Earth's surface fresh water.

There are over 4,000 species of plants, fish and wildlife in the Great Lakes basin.

The Great Lakes replenish slowly, at a rate of less than 1% each year, and it takes 300 years for a drop of water to travel from Lake Superior through Lakes Huron, Erie, Ontario and the St. Lawrence and into the ocean.

The Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River shoreline is the largest freshwater shoreline in the world, and Ontario has over 10,000 kilometres of this—more than all eight of the Great Lakes states combined.

Ontario's population is growing at a rate of 6% per year, mostly concentrated around the Great Lakes. It's the fastest-growing Great Lakes jurisdiction.

If the Great Lakes regions, including Ontario, Quebec and the eight Great Lakes states, were treated as a single economy, it would be the fourth-largest in the world, with a GDP of \$5.1 trillion and 56 million jobs.

The Great Lakes waters help generate 80% of Ontario's electricity, including hydroelectricity and cooling for power plants.

Ontario's commercial Great Lakes fisheries contributed about \$234 million to Ontario's economy in 2011, and Great Lakes regional anglers—of which I'm proudly one, Speaker—contribute more than \$600 million annually to Ontario's economy. I can attest to that on how many lures I lose.

In 2010, Ontario's Great Lakes region attracted over 73 million tourists. These tourists spent approximately \$12.3 billion.

Great Lakes shipping routes stimulate nearly \$16 billion in annual economic activity in Ontario and Quebec.

The watersheds of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River basin include all of southern Ontario and a large section of northern Ontario, as well as large sections of the United States, including eight Great Lakes states, and Quebec. These watersheds are home to 40% of Canadians, 75% of Canadian manufacturing, and one third of Canada's agriculture and processing jobs.

Over the last 400 years there have been accelerated stresses on our Great Lakes ecosystem. These main stresses include overfishing; nutrient loading; excess phosphorus and nitrogen due to human waste and urban and agricultural runoff; toxic chemicals; land use practices—for example, filling in wetlands and modification of shorelines; invasive species and animal species—the sea lamprey, Asian carp, zebra mussel; hydrologic alterations—diverting water flows with dams and channels; and climate change, of course, where we see higher volumes of climate-related weather patterns. Those stats should show us quite clearly that our Great Lakes are literally our lifeblood not only to our own personal and communal health but to our economic health as well. We rely on them maybe more than we even know. All the more reason for us to do everything that we can.

As I stated in my previous hit, this bill is far-reaching. As my colleague from Timiskaming–Cochrane stated, it has the potential to be either a really, really good bill, and

something that can be incredibly functional, or it could be a waste of time, and potentially disastrous if it isn't done in the right way with the right consultation and the right emphasis.

We, certainly, as New Democrats support this bill and we support the Great Lakes. We believe that access to water is a basic human right, and the Great Lakes are a shared public good. I don't think anyone in this House would disagree with that. The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin is obviously hugely important to our ecology, tourism and economy, and we need lakes and rivers that are drinkable, swimmable and fishable.

In terms of being potentially comprehensive legislation, we would say that this bill is long overdue. However, if you look at what exists in Great Lakes legislation and protection, we have several mechanisms that prescribe different controls and acts of law to protect the Great Lakes. We have the Ontario Water Resources Act that dates back to the 1950s, we have the Environmental Protection Act which is Ontario's main pollution control legislation, we have the Environmental Assessment Act which is Ontario's main environmental planning legislation and we have the Conservation Authorities Act that was enacted in 1946.

My colleague from Windsor–Tecumseh, who spent many years previously on Windsor city council—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Your speaker is right behind you and you guys are having a loud conversation in front of your own guy who's speaking.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: It was House stuff.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): If you've got House business, feel free to go outside and talk about it, not in front of the guy who's speaking right in front of you.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Speaker, I truly appreciate your intervention; thank you. Sometimes I want to say the same thing. It's tough to carry on two conversations at once so I certainly appreciate the role you do.

I was going through some of the various acts that we currently have on the books that deal with environmental protection and Great Lakes protection. The Conservation Authorities Act—I was talking about my colleague from Windsor–Tecumseh who spent many years on town council and also sat on the Essex Region Conservation Authority board and dealt with some of those issues in our region. He mentioned some of the great work that ERCA has done over the years to enhance our Great Lakes area and the surrounding areas of Windsor and Essex counties.

I just want to give a shout-out to those who work at ERCA and who continue to endeavour to protect our Great Lakes and our watersheds, specifically Tim Byrne who is a long-standing member and conservation officer with ERCA; he does a great job. He's a wonderful spokesperson for our region and is very knowledgeable and has a lot of experience in rural affairs as they pertain to the health of our Great Lakes. He's someone who has put a lot of thought into the effects of human activities

and what they do to our Great Lakes and our water systems. He comes from a farming family—the Byrnes are well-known, long-time farmers in Essex county—so he gets that juxtaposition of the protection of water as well as ensuring that we have economic development in our agriculture development. He certainly would take that balanced approach.

What we're asking and calling for the government to do, certainly within the context of this bill, is to find that balance. We would propose that the balance could be found through broad consultations. Travel this bill; get it out there. It's too far-reaching to just contain it in this House with the knowledge that we have and that our researchers can dig up for us. We have to talk to people like Tim Byrne. We have to talk to farmers out there who have been ensuring best practices—not only ensuring them but actually were the innovators of them: no-till practices that contained nutrients and ensured that we were able to avoid runoff into our watersheds. There are a lot of lessons to be learned out there that we can take from those on the ground. I hope that the government is confident enough in this bill and the prescriptions of this bill that they can go out and talk to people. We certainly would appreciate that and would support that in all measures.

0930

One of the things that the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change spoke about yesterday—he hit on a lot of issues. He came in for a two-minute hit and he kind of elaborated on why we need this bill. I appreciated the information that he delivered to us. He talked about nutrient runoff. He talked about some of the invasive species that are micro-organisms that we don't even know about. We talk about the zebra mussel, the round goby and the Asian carp as being invasive species, maybe because we can see them, but there are potentially other micro-organisms that we don't even know exist that have a detrimental effect on our water system.

He hit on one that I don't think we have paid enough attention to: the increased use and volume of pharmaceuticals that are found in our water treatment centres or facilities, municipal water treatment facilities. Our water treatment facilities are quite high-tech; they can do a lot of things. They use ozone. They use chemicals. They treat our water. By and large, you have seen that the drinking water quality in Ontario is among the very best in the world. However, when it comes to pharmaceuticals in our water system—when you go to your doctor, your doctor may prescribe you a certain medicine. They'll give you the prescription, and maybe you might even get another prescription for another ailment. But what they'll say, what they'll clearly tell you, is, “You can take this pill, you can take this pill, but make sure you don't mix it with this third pill, because that can have some detrimental and contraindication effects within the pharmaceuticals.”

What we're doing is, we are all pouring our own various pharmaceuticals into our water system, and it is having some very serious effects on the various eco-

systems within the Great Lakes. We're seeing reptiles in certain areas feeling the effects and having various potential mutations because we're not able to treat pharmaceuticals. We just don't know how to do that; the science isn't there within our water treatment system.

It's something that I would love to see this government take a clear focus on and be the leader in Canada and around the world in terms of how we deal with this huge problem, the increased use of pharmaceuticals through human activity—how we're going to deal with that, going into the future.

The bill prescribes a lot of regulation through the Lieutenant Governor in Council, so we need to ensure that those are given due consideration. It's always tough when we see a bill come through that prescribes so much to regulation, because there's so much that is unknown. I think you heard it here today during the debate: We don't know how much potential downloading of responsibility onto municipalities this bill will prescribe. There's some concern out there within the Association of Municipalities of Ontario that this will, again, be another job that they will have to take on and find the resources to be able to do that. That's certainly not a partnership that our communities in and around our Great Lakes are looking for. They're looking for some leadership, through the provincial government, to actually tackle some of the issues that we see.

Many have talked about nutrient runoff and its effects. We know that in other jurisdictions, mainly in the United States, they're just starting to tackle this problem. We've had the Nutrient Management Act since 2002. It's a statute that was enacted following the Walkerton inquiry. It requires farmers and those operators to develop nutrient management strategies as part of source water protection, and large livestock operators in Ontario have had to be in compliance with the act since 2005.

We've been ahead of the curve on this, and our agricultural community has done a lot of work in ensuring that they maintain the nutrients that are on their fields. We've heard why. Certainly, as stewards of the environment and of the land, they understand that they have a vested interest in maintaining not only the health of their plots of land but the health of their communities so that we can all enjoy, ultimately, the fruits of their labour. They get that circle of life, or that economic circle.

What they also do not want to do is waste any money. They would literally, if they didn't embark on those best practices, be flushing it down the drain. We understand that in the New Democratic Party, and we certainly want to support those farmers and recognize them when they are utilizing those best practices. That's something we don't do.

Of course, we understand what happened in Toledo, Ohio—I believe it was close to two years ago—where they had such massive agricultural runoff that it actually shut down their water treatment system and they had to have bottled water for a number of days, potentially weeks. It gave them cause to enact legislation to ensure that farmers were not spraying nutrients onto their fields

when there was a high level of saturation or when there was an anticipated level of saturation due to the forecast.

Speaker, we've been doing that in Ontario for years now. We understand that, and it's certainly something that we see our farmers in Essex county utilizing, that type of nutrient management system.

There are some things that the bill talks about that are new and potentially innovative, and one is geographically focused initiatives. We're not quite sure what that specifically means. I guess it gives the minister the ability to identify specific projects in areas that they want to tackle. So whether they be acute issues in some areas—I don't know how they plan on funding that or supporting that, through which mechanism, through the Ministry of the Environment, whether they'll have sort of a SWAT team to go out and actually address these specific, geographically focused initiatives, because there is currently no type of body that does that.

The other aspect that I guess is novel in this bill is the implementation and establishment of the Great Lakes Guardians' Council, which will be made up of the Minister of the Environment as well as other stakeholders with connections to the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin. The council will meet at least once a year to discuss priorities for action, funding measures, targets and initiatives. This is a great idea. We should all get together and talk about the health of the Great Lakes. But what teeth will it have? We know the IJC, the International Joint Commission, is solely focused on the health and maintenance of the Great Lakes in an international context. They've done a lot of great work. There is a ton of research that comes out of the IJC. Will this council have the ability to embark on research projects? Will they have, again, legislative teeth to uphold some of the laws that are currently on the books? We're not quite sure.

What we do know is that the stakeholders who make up the Great Lakes Guardians' Council should be very broad. We should see a broad segment of those who are in the agriculture industry, municipal leadership, and some laypeople too. Let's just hear from normal people about what their effects are. Let's bring in our community members who can spread that message about the fact that we may actually be doing something tangible to support the health of our Great Lakes.

Speaker, I think I'm nearing the end of my time here. I want to thank the members for listening intently, specifically my colleagues here, who have been good and quiet for the remainder of the time since your intervention. I want to thank all the members for their attention here this morning.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Newmarket–Aurora.

Mr. Chris Ballard: I'd like to thank the member for Essex for his comments on this bill.

I couldn't agree more with everyone who has spoken to this bill about the importance of clean water. It goes without saying. Growing up in the township of King, where I did, I witnessed first-hand a degradation of the water, primarily the East Humber River that flows

through King township and eventually makes its way to Lake Ontario. When my father was a young boy, he'd fish for speckled trout in that lake. As a young boy, I was able to fish for bass in that river system.

0940

I would challenge people in today's world to even find where that creek is, because it has dried up, the fish are gone and it's nothing more than an algae-filled series of little ponds. So we see first-hand what happens when we don't take care of our water systems.

I'm hoping—and I believe—that this proposed legislation will go a long way to making sure that the water within the Great Lakes is protected and that future generations don't see the degradation of water systems that I witnessed and my father witnessed over, really, a fairly short time of probably only 80 years or so.

I know that in my riding of Newmarket–Aurora, even though we sit on the Oak Ridges moraine—known as the rain barrel—about 75% of our water in our riding is pumped from Lake Ontario and makes its way up to our distribution system. So even though we're a number of miles away from Lake Ontario, it's very important we make sure that that water quality is maintained.

It is good to see that we're going to have the support of all three parties as we move this bill ahead.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I'd like to make a few comments on the member from Essex's comments.

I agree with everything people are saying here today as far as water being probably the most important resource that we have. However, this Great Lakes Protection Act—I have some real problems with how this will actually be implemented.

When you look at an act like the Lake Simcoe Protection Act, we're talking about a watershed, and we actually worked with the municipalities and the federal government around the watershed. That's how we protect Lake Simcoe. Of course, it works, and it slowly is improving. However, when you look at the multiple jurisdictions that are on both sides of the border on the Great Lakes, I think it's almost an impossibility to ever properly implement this bill. Someone said it sounds like a great photo op, when you cut the ribbon to say the bill was introduced or you have a fancy evening at some fancy suite somewhere and everybody brags about how wonderful things are, but the reality is the whole implementation process, I think, is going to be a real problem.

The International Joint Commission, in my opinion, is the group that should be leading the actual charge on this Great Lakes Protection Act. That's who is responsible. That takes in people from all across North America. As well, we have the Great Lakes mayors, who are also a group that's trying to protect the Great Lakes. However, one province creating legislation when there are probably 75 other jurisdictions that are impacting this I think is a cause for concern. How will this actually be implemented over a long period of time?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Algoma–Manitoulin.

Mr. Michael Mantha: I'm always pleased and honoured and privileged to rise on behalf of the voices in Algoma-Manitoulin and speak to this bill this morning.

The introduction of the Great Lakes act is something that I want to see and that people across the riding want to see as well. But the concern that was raised by my colleague from Timiskaming-Cochrane earlier was that if there's no follow-through on this, once again—and this is a theme that I've used over the years that I've been here—it's a plan to implement a plan to make a plan. And that plan might go in two different ways: It might be a positive one or it might be a negative one.

What the member from Essex so eloquently brought up in his remarks is the importance of reaching out: the importance of reaching out to all stakeholders, gathering the information, travelling the bill to various communities and listening to the agricultural sector, the tourism sector, the marinas—everyone. Everyone needs to have the opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to tell you that just a couple of years ago, we had to fight in order to get the IJC committee meetings to be heard on Manitoulin Island. It was great that we finally got it rescheduled, but why wouldn't we have meetings on the largest freshwater island in the world? That's Manitoulin Island. It's right in the basket. So getting that meeting was absolutely imperative.

My colleague so eloquently talked about flushing pharmaceutical products down into our waterways. You know what? You flush it; you forget about it.

But there is another big problem that we're hiding, that we're not speaking enough about: the hiding of nuclear waste in Kincardine, putting it a mile away from our biggest freshwater body of water that we have across this country—and we're doing it. We need to question ourselves and challenge ourselves—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Thank you. Questions and comments?

Ms. Soo Wong: Good morning. I'm very pleased to stand this morning to speak in support of Bill 66. We are very fortunate here in Ontario to have one of the best great lakes systems in the country but also in the world.

As a former nurse, I was visiting Kenya back around 2008. The last day I was leaving Kenya, six little persons died from drinking dirty water. We know water can kill. It is our collective responsibility in this chamber to protect the clean water that we have for the next generation.

A bigger piece of this proposed legislation that I want to speak to is that the proposed legislation has been strengthened in the following area: dealing with the First Nations and Métis communities. We don't have to look far. Yesterday, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission told us all the wrongs the government of Canada did. And now we need to do more. I'm very pleased our government is committed to working with the First Nations and Métis communities in engaging in the development of the proposed act.

We also know that the strengthening of this act provides provisions on the earlier versions to help Ontario to continue to build the partnership that we have with the

First Nations and Métis communities. This includes the First Nations' and Métis' participation in the guardians' council and early involvement in the development of geographically focused initiatives involving the revision of Ontario's Great Lakes Strategy. More importantly, we need to make sure that the traditional ecological knowledge, as well as their consideration, is being considered in this particular bill.

I'm very pleased this morning to hear from the third party, the member from Essex and his eloquent remarks, at the beginning of this portion of the debate, of his support, but also the member from the official opposition party. At the end of the day, it's our collective responsibility to protect the Great Lakes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Essex has two minutes.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I want to thank the members from Newmarket-Aurora, Simcoe North, Algoma-Manitoulin, and Scarborough-Agincourt for their comments.

My colleague from Algoma-Manitoulin raised a point that I wanted to touch on but I didn't get a chance to. The proposal by the federal government to create a nuclear waste depository along the basin of Lake Huron, miles under the ground, is frightening. That's a nightmare waiting to happen, literally. Those who are opponents of this have been quite vocal. There are a lot of folks in the bordering United States who are making a lot of hay of this issue. We have yet to hear anything tangible from our environment minister, specifically, about the role that Ontario can play. That's discouraging.

I would like to see a clear plan on this issue, specifically. We cannot afford to have our entire Great Lakes system contaminated by nuclear waste because we figure we can just bury it. We have to come up with something more complex and something more functional than just burying our problems. I don't know whether that specific issue can be dealt with or will be dealt with within the context of this new Great Lakes Protection Act. I hope it is.

I hope it can be, but given the standoffish nature of the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change at this point in handing that responsibility solely off to the federal government—we know they're not going to take it seriously. They're the ones who are proposing that we deal with this in that way. Let's take some leadership on that file.

I certainly appreciate the comments from all of my colleagues, and I welcome further debate.

0950

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Mr. Jack MacLaren: I will speak to Bill 66, the Great Lakes Protection Act, which I strongly oppose as a very wrongful piece of legislation that will hurt Ontarians.

There are a number of points that I would like to make, and I will begin with speaking to the loss of local autonomy. The implementation of this bill will result in the further erosion of local autonomy for communities

across Ontario. The continual destruction of local autonomy by the provincial government is based on the demonstrably false premise that the environment continues to degrade, that local municipalities and private land-owners are the cause of that degradation, that municipalities are either incapable or unwilling to successfully address environmental issues, and that a minister in Toronto and his hand-picked people know what is best for them and needs to set them straight.

Many, many rural and northern Ontario residents and municipalities disagree with that flawed and, quite frankly, insulting assumption. To that end, in an effort to inform policy-makers of the needs of rural and northern Ontario, the Rural Ontario Municipal Association developed the Rural and Northern Lens to assist policy-makers to evaluate proposed policies. I want to focus on three specific questions included in the Rural and Northern Lens to illustrate a number of my misgivings with this bill:

(1) Does the proposed initiative benefit or hinder the fiscal realities of rural and northern Ontario?

(2) Does the proposed initiative have a business case that accounts for low and sparse populations?

(3) Does the proposed initiative have adequate human and financial resources to be effective?

The truth is, we don't know the answers to any of those questions. Funds have not been allocated to Bill 66. In fact, the bill instructs the guardians' council to recommend potential funding mechanisms—that would be the taxpayer, because we know one way or the other that is the one who will pay, whether through higher taxes or through higher product prices.

In addition, there are no assurances that rural and northern municipally elected representatives or residents will be invited to participate, and even if they are invited to participate, that they will be listened to.

Lastly, designated policies and regulations included within geographically focused initiatives will override the decisions of local elected officials, including local official plans and zoning bylaws.

The structure of this bill is eerily similar to another provincial government boondoggle called the Green Energy Act. If the industrial wind turbines are so wonderful, why did the provincial government remove municipal decision-making authority with respect to wind turbines? Even after promising to stop imposing industrial wind turbines on unwilling hosts, the provincial government continues to do so, deaf to scientists, deaf to residents, deaf to taxpayers and deaf to municipalities.

Given the open-ended nature of this bill, the question must be asked: What surprises does the provincial government have in store for residents that they feel it necessary to remove local decision-making authority? Time will tell, I'm afraid.

Existing legislation: The provincial government claims that they need new legal tools to deal with emerging priorities. Yet when asked what those priorities are, the government states that the guardians' council will identify priorities sometime in the future. So the provincial

government needs legislation to address priorities that they cannot currently identify. That sounds very suspicious.

The provincial government is in the habit, when introducing legislation, of insinuating that a hole exists with respect to environmental protection. This claim could not be further from the truth. Legislation, policies, regulations, agreements and organizations protecting the environment, and the Great Lakes specifically, have been in place for decades, including the Clean Water Act, the Environmental Protection Act, the Nutrient Management Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Water Opportunities Act, the Water Resources Act, the Conservation Authorities Act, the Planning Act, the provincial policy statement, the International Joint Commission, the Great Lakes committee of the Canada-Ontario Agreement and the US-Canada Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, to name just a few.

To say that this bill will create overlap, duplication and conflict is an understatement, and all without the oversight of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. This is a very concerning trend: open-ended, vague, arbitrary legislation that allows the minister to consolidate power and essentially legislate on his own with little, if any, oversight.

Accountability brings me to another concerning trend: the increased creation and/or use of outside groups. Groups that are unelected and unaccountable to the electorate for regulatory functions is not an innovative governance tool. It is nothing short of the creation of a shadow corporatist governance structure, the function of which is to bypass the legitimate legislative process.

We have very telling examples of what happens when outside groups are given power and authority with too little or no oversight. For example, the lack of oversight and accountability of the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals that resulted in an organization run amok, an organization that destroys people's lives because they can, because they do not face the consequences for bad behaviour.

The inherent conflict of interest created by delegating police powers to an organization that relies on fundraising, while addressed by the courts, still has not been addressed by the provincial government. In fact, despite their blatant abuse of power, the provincial government has recently decided to give the OSPCA more power—this heavy-handed, biased, unaccountable government.

What conflicts of interest will be created by Bill 66? We don't know yet, but we do know that NGOs are not above using their lobbying power and appointments to target political enemies, including local businesses. An appointment to the guardians' council could potentially be used to encourage and legitimize politically motivated attacks.

Centralization and private property rights: Private property rights are the foundation of western civilization and democracy. Private property rights are the underpinning of our prosperity. Private property rights and the resulting prosperity are the reason our environment has

improved and continues to improve. Centralized collective control of land inevitably leads to a worse environment. This is demonstrable. Unfortunately, in Ontario we have seen the incremental destruction of private property rights by all levels of governments over the last several decades.

I fear that this bill, with its ill-defined and arbitrary authority, is the final nail in the coffin of private property rights in Ontario and, therefore, our prosperity and our environment, because without the wealth to fund investments into the environment, they won't happen.

A self-evident truth is that private property owners are the best decision-makers with respect to their property as they have a vested interest in investing in and improving their property compared to remote, centralized decision-makers who are unaccountable for the outcomes of their decisions. The best decisions for communities and the environment are made at the local level, whether by a local municipality or a private landowner.

We know that increased centralization of decision-making and collective control of property results in decreasing prosperity and a degraded environment.

1000

One of the best, most visible examples of this phenomenon is just a couple of kilometres east of Queen's Park, in Cabbagetown. In the 1940s a large swath of Cabbagetown was torn down to build Regent Park, a collectively owned and centrally controlled public housing project. It is true that Cabbagetown was a slum at the time, but it wasn't because the residents were lazy or didn't want a better environment but because they lacked resources.

Over time, as the residents of Cabbagetown accumulated wealth, they invested their individually accumulated resources in their individual properties, and today Cabbagetown is a beautiful, green neighbourhood. Currently, homes in Cabbagetown routinely sell for well over \$1 million. Also currently, Regent Park, collectively owned and centrally controlled, is being torn down. Regent Park degraded over time because its residents did not own the land and so did not have an incentive to invest in and improve their environment. Centralized decision-making authority and collective control of private land will remove the inherent incentive of private property owners to invest in their land and will inevitably result in a degraded environment.

Censorship: What is rarely talked about in this House but what concerns me is censorship. This bill not only removes the decision-making authority of local authorities, including municipalities, it requires public bodies to support the decisions of the minister. In other words, elected officials, land use planners and other professionals working for a planning authority or local municipality cannot submit a dissenting view, even if the public is in disagreement, even if in their professional opinion, a designated policy is unwarranted and will result in bad outcomes. The question needs to be asked: What ugly surprises does the provincial government have in store for residents and municipalities that they felt it necessary

to remove the ability of local decision-making authorities to dissent?

Public consultations: Notice for the public hearing for Bill 6, the predecessor to Bill 66, was given approximately 36 hours prior to the hearing taking place. The hearing was held for one day, in a committee room at Queen's Park. The short notice period limited hearing time, and the location of the hearing disenfranchised many resource user groups, landowners, municipalities, residents and other interested stakeholders who were unable to attend due to time and travel constraints.

Given that the scope of this bill spans 105 of the 107 ridings in the province and so could potentially adversely impact the well-being of the vast majority of residents, municipalities, people and businesses in Ontario, I strongly recommend that the hearings be held in a variety of locations across the province and that ample notice be provided to the public prior to public hearings being held. People have a right to be heard, not simply to send in a submission which can be safely ignored, but to be heard by MPPs and other citizens alike, particularly rural and northern residents, who routinely feel ignored by this government.

Again, I will refer to ROMA's Rural and Northern Lens. There are just three questions that need to be answered prior to this bill being passed:

Does the proposed initiative ensure that rural and northern communities are receiving equitable treatment or services relative to other parts of the province?

Does the proposed initiative accommodate the aspirations of residents from rural communities and the north?

Does the proposed initiative build upon the input and advice of rural residents, communities and municipalities?

The provincial government needs to hear from a whole lot of people prior to passing and implementing this bill, so that Ontarians may ask questions and hold the government to account.

In conclusion, a constituent sent me a very powerful quote the other day that sums this bill up quite nicely: "If you can't trust people with freedom, how can you trust people with power?" The centralization of power in this bill, similar to the Green Energy Act, will not just disenfranchise private landowners, but also local communities. Rural Ontario doesn't trust this government, and for good reason: Past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour. We have witnessed communities devastated by the imposition of industrial wind turbines, which chop up birds, devalue property and make people sick.

The arbitrary nature of this bill begs the question, what further environmentally destructive policies is the provincial government planning to impose on rural Ontario through this bill? Rural people are tired of being bullied by this government, whether it's the utter mismanagement of Hydro One, the Green Energy Act, the imposition of industrial wind turbines on unwilling hosts, high and rising energy prices, the loss of 300,000 good manufacturing jobs, the Caledonia land dispute, the unnecessary College of Trades, the eco tax, the HST added

to hydro bills, the cancelling of the OLG slots program at horse racing tracks, the carbon tax, the Ontario pension plan—the list is endless.

Here is my last question for the provincial government: Crown land already comprises 85% of the province of Ontario. How much more of our private land and wealth is the provincial government going to seize for itself?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments? The member from Toronto–Danforth.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Thank you very much, Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity.

The member who spoke before me has a lack of confidence in the bill for reasons that would be very different from mine. I don't think it's a bad thing at all to take on an ambitious goal to protect the Great Lakes. In fact, I would say the people of this province want that to happen.

The concern that I and others have is whether or not the government actually would act to protect the Great Lakes, given a number of events and initiatives on their part: the deep geologic repository that my colleagues from Algoma–Manitoulin and Essex have mentioned, putting a major nuclear waste dump along the shores of Lake Huron, using a technology that has already failed in the United States—there was a substantial fire and a release of radioactivity to the surface. We have to recognize that if we're going to protect the Great Lakes, we have to do it in partnership with the other Great Lakes jurisdictions: Michigan, Illinois, Ohio. Frankly, they object to us threatening the Great Lakes with this deep geologic repository. They're the people we're going to have to depend on if we're going to have a cohesive, comprehensive plan to actually protect the lakes.

The other concern I have is that there was an oil spill this winter in Gogama. A CN train went off the rails; large amounts of oil were spilled; there was a substantial fire. There has been a cleanup going on, but to this point there has been no talk, no indication of an investigation that would lead to charges against CN for irresponsibility.

I haven't investigated it all. Proper investigations have to be done. But if this government isn't willing to prosecute in those circumstances, when will it stand up for water quality in this province?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Hon. David Zimmer: Speaker, I want to address two points in the debate. First of all, I listened to the Conservative member opposite, and he seems to feel that there is no role for government in the environmental protection of our Great Lakes. But when we think of it, we have five Great Lakes. We have a huge population base. We have the cities of Toronto, Cleveland, Chicago, Thunder Bay, Detroit and numerous other towns in numerous jurisdictions—Ontario, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, a little piece of Pennsylvania, New York. The only way to coordinate a transnational response to this crisis is through what's contemplated in this legislation, and

that's the Great Lakes Guardians' Council. It's not just Ontarians who have an interest in this; it's all of those other jurisdictions and subnational jurisdictions, the Canadian government and the American federal government. If there ever was a place for government to play a role, it is in something like this.

1010

The second point that I wanted to address is the consultation with the First Nations and Métis communities. For thousands and thousands of years, the First Nations have been resident on the shores of the Great Lakes: Lake Superior, Lake Ontario and so on. In fact, Chicago is an aboriginal name; Toronto is an aboriginal name. Many other cities have aboriginal names. There are many, many First Nations that are situated along the various shorelines of the Great Lakes. They have built up knowledge over thousands and thousands of years about how to treat the water and how to manage these issues, and they should be consulted.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Jim McDonnell: It's always a pleasure to get up to respond to one of my colleagues. I disagree with the member opposite, because I think the best way to protect the Great Lakes is to get all the partners together. We have those committees already. We are a part of a US-Canada partnership. I think that that's where our voice needs to be heard, because, unfortunately, most of the industrial activity happens elsewhere. We are a big part of it—the largest part of it—but I heard earlier talk about the algae blooms in Lake Erie. That originates in Ohio, so we need to work with our partners to get those issues under control.

It's a great photo op. We can talk a lot about this. There is no funding in this. There is no money for any work to be done on the Great Lakes in this. There are no measurements. This is just another "Let's see what we're doing here. We've got another title here that we can stand in front of the camera."

Ontarians are looking for results. They're looking to work with their partners and get meaningful results that can be measured. They're looking for improvements, and we've had great improvements over the years.

It's time to get to work at getting Ontarians back to work. The people of Ontario are looking for more from their government and this province. It's unfortunate; it's another photo op. We've had a couple of pictures on the big staircase. Maybe we can do that tomorrow and say that we have another bill and we're out there working for Ontario, but we need results. Where are the measurements in this? We don't see that.

Anyway, it will be, I guess, a work in progress. We support the initiative, but there are tools that are at our command right now that we could be using but we aren't, and we think that's a mistake.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'm pleased to add my comments to the member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills's

speech. He's quite pessimistic about the nature of the bill. I would take a different approach.

There are some things, of course—New Democrats believe that the government should, and has to, play a specific role in ensuring our protection, whether it be protection of one's self or environmental protection, or health and safety regulations in our workplaces. There are lots of areas where we need to play a role. My concern is that this bill allows them to potentially not play a role and download their responsibility to other jurisdictions. The municipalities, for instance, I think are concerned that this will just be another lever for the government to pull and to off-load responsibility for source water protection when it comes to the health of the Great Lakes.

We are in an age where we know the hazards to our Great Lakes system. We've seen them many times before, whether they be ecological spills or pollution, yet we still continue to embark on those types of methods.

I read an article yesterday that talked about line 5, which is a 62-year-old pipe. It's an Enbridge pipe under the Mackinac straits. Those who are informed about these types of things are calling on it to be immediately abandoned. It could rupture at any time, and if it does it will cascade oil down through the Great Lakes system in a way in which we could never imagine.

We have to change the way we do things, and hopefully this bill allows us to do that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Carleton—Mississippi Mills has two minutes.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: I'd like to thank the members from Toronto—Danforth, Willowdale, Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry and Essex for their comments.

I am strongly opposed to this piece of legislation. It should not pass. It is unnecessary. It is wrongful. We're identifying problems that don't exist that we think we need to fix. Actually, water in the Great Lakes system over the recent decades has been improving. We are better educated and better informed about the problems causing pollution. People know the damage it does. Private citizens and industry are doing a much better job in monitoring pollution and taking care of water, and the water quality has improved.

We already have a dozen pieces of legislation in this province that address water quality, including the International Joint Commission between the United States and Canada. That is there already. We don't need any more government regulations and legislation. We're over-regulated, if anything.

This bill is very vague, non-specific and hands power over to people who are unaccountable. This is an absolute assault on private property rights, which is the basis of our democracy and our freedom, and this must not pass. We have to have respect for the private landowner. This bill does not do that.

This guardians' council is an organization of independents. We don't know where they will come from and they certainly do not have, or may not have, the best interests of the private landowner at heart.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): It being close to—actually, past 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

The House recessed from 1017 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'd like everyone to welcome to the Legislature Jon and Susan Lazarus, the parents of Jordan Lazarus, who works in my office. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Monte McNaughton: It gives me great honour today to introduce, from my riding of Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, Shirley Parkin-Bobier and Brenda Miller. Welcome to Queen's Park today.

Miss Monique Taylor: Once again, I want to welcome the family of our page Bridget Le Donne. Today we have her aunt Tanya Le Donne; her sister, once again, Gabrielle Le Donne—she was a former page; welcome back to Queen's Park, Gabby—her father, Dino Le Donne; and her friend David Maida. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Chris Ballard: I'd like to welcome to the members' gallery Nicolas Wolf, an intern in my office here at Queen's Park and a resident of my riding.

Ms. Cindy Forster: I'd like to introduce our guests from Equal Voice: Jessica Brandon and Rita Komarova.

Hon. Brad Duguid: It's National Access Awareness Week this week. I want to introduce Cassidy Smith, government relations, March of Dimes—they have their gala, I believe, tomorrow night—and Lorin MacDonald, disability advocate and special adviser for accessibility strategies at People Access. Thank you for being here. Thank you for your leadership.

Mr. Todd Smith: I'd like to welcome a guest in the west members' gallery. Christopher Poulos is joining us this morning.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'd like to congratulate Maya Scott from London West, who is page captain today. She is joined today by her mother, Maria Calleja; her father, Ian Scott; and her brother Aidan Scott, who are in the public gallery. Welcome.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: I'm pleased to welcome Mrs. Eliot and the grades 11 and 12 law students from Barrie Central Collegiate in my riding of Barrie. Welcome.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Please welcome the Girls Government program from two schools in Dufferin—Caledon: from Princess Margaret Public School: Justice, Lily, Brooklynn, Madison, Noelle, Ashley, Jada, Paige, Hannah, Madilyne, Kaitlain, Acadia, Abby and teachers Laurie and Tracey, and from Island Lake Public School: Kylie, Renee, Vicki, Kaylee, Breanne, Maddie, Laura, Tia and teacher Amanda with my outstanding volunteer Lauren MacDonald. They just did a presentation to the Minister of Education, and they rocked it.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I would like to welcome a former educator and superintendent from the Greater Essex County District School Board, Rod Peterson.

I'd also like to welcome my daughter Morgan Gretzky and my nephew Duncan Jursic.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: In anticipation of something happening in this chamber today involving Terry Fox, the cast from Sheridan College's production of *Waiting for a Miracle: The Terry Fox Story*, are with us today. They'll be performing at 12 o'clock. Their names are Mike Mulrooney, Emma Smit, Micah Richardson, Greg Solomon, Amanda Trapp, Brittany King, Gavin Bowerman, Lucas Popowich, Eric Dahlinger, Sam Gaetz and Rachel Harrison. They'll be performing at noon in room 247. All members of all parties are invited.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'd like to introduce today in the members' gallery, former MPP and the one you can all blame for convincing me to run for this job in the first place, Norm Sterling.

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's my pleasure to welcome some members from Equal Voice this morning. We have Sarosh Anwar, Farzana Nanji, Alice Propper and Bobbi France. Thank you very much for coming in today and talking about women in politics.

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: Mr. Speaker, I'd like everyone to give a warm welcome to my mother-in-law, Dorothea Harris, who is visiting from Campbell River, BC. I have to say she's the best mother-in-law in the world. There she is.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I'm very pleased to welcome to the House my constit manager, Janet Haines, and a wonderful volunteer in my office as well, Sheena Haines.

Miss Monique Taylor: I'd like to welcome a couple of women who were here this morning for Equal Voice: Linda Kelso and Jeanne Pacey. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I'd like to welcome to the Legislature David, Vicky and their son Nick Villeneuve. Welcome.

Ms. Gila Martow: I want to welcome Doris Wexler-Charow. She provides rehabilitation to accident victims and she's going to be here in front of Queen's Park today at lunchtime with a lot of her friends. They're protesting cuts to catastrophic injuries in accident insurance.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I'd like to, first of all, congratulate page captain Jany Scherer, all the way from Kapuskasing, Ontario; and also, son uncle Matthieu Vallieres, qui est dans les tribunes publiques.

Mr. Yvan Baker: I just wanted to welcome to the gallery Andrew Ipekian, a lifelong friend, one of the best friends you could ask for and one of the best real estate agents in the city. Welcome, Andrew.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I'd like to welcome, from Lanterra construction, Graham Lake, Andrey Azarov and Brett Fahey.

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: Speaker, I'd like to welcome a school from my riding who will be visiting the Legislature today, Henry Hudson Senior Public School.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I'd like to welcome the folks who are here today from the Residential Construction

Council of Ontario, RESCON, and I'd like to invite all MPPs to a luncheon at 12 o'clock in rooms 228 and 230.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to personally congratulate you, as well as myself, on our fifth election. We were elected first on June 3, 1999, and we are the only two remaining of the 18 that were elected that year.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Happy anniversary.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: Today, I'd like to introduce to the Legislature two politically engaged young people from my riding of Davenport, Lianhao Qu and Michelle Knowlton, who are here today with their parents Yan Gu, Nicole Knowlton and Shaun Lewis. Welcome, ladies.

Mr. Norm Miller: I'm pleased to welcome back to the Legislature page Jessica Terry's mother, Shena Terry, who has been a regular visitor here, but also her grandparents Debby Parker and John Parker, who are here visiting today. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and congratulations on the anniversary.

I've got two very special guests in the east members' gallery: a good friend of mine, Norm Gale, chief of the Superior North Emergency Medical Services, and he's the president of the Ontario Association of Paramedic Chiefs; and Neal Roberts, who is chief of the Middlesex-London Emergency Medical Services. Welcome, gentlemen. It's good to have you here.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: It's a lovely day, Speaker. I have a number of people here. Meg Cormack is an intern in my office this summer. Welcome, Meg, to the Legislative Assembly. Lauren McDonald is a friend from London and a remarkable advocate for people with disabilities. An additional welcome to Norm Gale and Neal Roberts, our wonderful paramedics.

Hon. Michael Coteau: It's my pleasure to welcome 11 really bright young men from Northmount School from the beautiful riding of Don Valley East. I asked them a few questions this morning about government. They got all the answers right. Welcome to the Legislature.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Halton.

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: Thank you, again, Mr. Speaker, and I apologize. My husband, Dr. Randy Harris, is sitting beside my mother-in-law, and I'd like to introduce him today.

1040

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I'd like to welcome to the Legislature today an award-winning poet from Windsor, Mary Ann Mulhern. I'll have more to say about her during my statement this afternoon.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): As is the tradition of the Speaker when a former member is in the House, I do try to recognize them officially, even though it has been stepped on again.

Former MPP Norm Sterling served in the 31st to the 39th Parliaments. Welcome, Norm. We're glad you're here.

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): A point of order from the leader of the third party.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Thank you, Speaker. I rise to seek unanimous consent for a representative from each caucus to speak for up to five minutes in acknowledgement of the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report issued June 2, 2015.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The leader of the third party is seeking unanimous consent to speak for up to five minutes per party on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report. Do we agree? Agreed.

I understand we have the order understood.

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I would like to share my time with the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

Every day that we are in this Legislature, we gather on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit. I am here today and stand to affirm the province of Ontario's commitment to reconciliation, to supporting survivors and to continuing to build trust with aboriginal partners.

Thank you to the Honourable Justice Murray Sinclair and the entire Truth and Reconciliation Commission for shining a light into one of the darkest chapters of our country's history.

Thank you particularly to the survivors who shared their experiences and the experiences of those whose voices were lost.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has offered the province of Ontario and all Canadians an opportunity to renew our relationship with First Nation, Métis and Inuit people of this country, and has challenged us to renew our commitment to live together on this land, based on principles of trust, mutual respect and shared benefits. Working with our First Nation, Métis and Inuit partners is a challenge that our province has accepted, but it is work that is far from complete.

This painful chapter in our shared past is one in which Canada practised state-sanctioned abuse and assimilation. Over a period of generations, and under various governments, families were separated and children were deeply harmed, and continue to bear the scars and the consequences of this time. Their humanity was undermined. They were separated from their families and robbed of their youth, their potential, their comfort, their safety and their dignity. This has left a legacy of racism and marginalization that continues to echo in the lives of aboriginal peoples across our society.

We all have a responsibility to work towards reconciliation. Each one of us must ask what that reconciliation means in our own lives: in our work, in our families, in our places of worship, in our churches and in our broader communities.

I'm very pleased to join my fellow Premiers across Canada as we take steps towards reconciliation. We cannot change our past, but by unearthing the truth and truly understanding its meaning, we give ourselves the power to change the future.

Mr. Speaker and fellow MPPs, this is an important moment in our relationships. The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and what happened to generations of First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples in Canada, must never be forgotten and must be known and understood by all, if we're to forge a future that is worthy of the inclusive and compassionate society for which we all strive.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

Hon. David Zimmer: Speaker, let me put a human face on this issue with a very human story.

There is a book—and I would urge all members to have a look at it—on residential schools in Ontario. There is a chapter on a residential school at Six Nations, near Brantford, in your riding.

Just let me, for a second, read one paragraph: "The British North America Act ... gave" the Prime Minister of the day "and the Canadian government complete control over the country's aboriginal people. The government began" to establish "Indian boarding schools. Living at these schools, away from their families, the children could be completely controlled by the staff. Through a process known as assimilation, the children's beliefs and behaviours would be forcibly adjusted to the European way of life.

"The model for these schools"—that is, throughout Canada—"was the Mohawk Indian Industrial School (also known as the Mohawk Institute), in Brantford, Ontario.

A former British army officer was in charge. The harsh daily routine, rules and regulations, were based on strict army training'... the Mohawk Institute inspired the system that followed."

Speaker, I was invited by Chief Ava Hill at Six Nations to visit the remnants of that school. It's in a building now—it's still there—and I was given a tour of the building. It was a visceral experience for me.

I will tell you two things that I saw. One, the students at the school had a nickname for the school. It was called the Mush Hole. Why was it called the Mush Hole? We were taken down to the basement, and there were huge kettle drums in which mush—food—was prepared. That is what the students at the school ate, hence the nickname for the school: not the Mohawk Institute, but, in the aboriginal community, it was known as the Mush Hole. The students had great fear of being picked up or sent to the Mush Hole.

The other part that stood out in my mind—and it was an emotional experience—I was taken to the third floor. Some of the students had pried out the bricks. There was an inner wall and an outer wall. Normally there would be insulation between the two walls. They had pulled out the bricks and made a little cave between the walls. We went in there, and what we saw was a hiding place for young students. Littering the floor of this hiding place were the bits and pieces that a child experiences in their life. There were a couple of candy wrappers; there were some torn pages from a comic book; there was a glove; there was a

sock. There were the other things that children leave behind in their play places. These children hid out between the walls to escape the harshness of this residential school.

In the book, there is a short quote from a resident of the residential school. His name was Geronimo Henry. He was a resident there from 1942 to 1953. He said, "They tried to convert me in there. They took away my ceremonies, my rituals and my language. They tried to assimilate us. They told us our religion and our rituals were the devil's work ... they took away my language, my own spiritual beliefs, and my culture." He lived in that environment for nine years.

It was a harsh, bleak and loveless setting. That's what I felt when I left the environment. It was a visceral experience—one of the most moving that I've had—that puts this in a real, real, live context.

We are doing a number of things to ensure that Ontarians and the rest of Canadians have their own experience or understanding of what has happened in the residential school system. We've done a lot of things, but the thing that I'm most proud of, as I know the Premier and the Minister of Education are, is we have designed a curriculum to include the aboriginal residential experience in the curriculum.

Our sense is that if students and, indeed, their parents and members of this Legislature were to leaf through this book, they would have a whole different, qualitative sense of what the residential school system was about and why the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was so important.

There are many other things that we've done. I just wanted to leave you with that visceral insight. Thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Mr. Speaker, it's with great respect toward our aboriginal brothers and sisters that I'm pleased to rise in this House today on behalf of the PC caucus and leader Patrick Brown to recognize and welcome the hard work done by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission since it was formally struck on June 1, 2008.

With the release of the report and its 94 recommendations yesterday, I must say that it provides a strikingly sad glimpse into a part of our collective history as Ontarians and as Canadians.

1050

I would first like to thank the chair of the commission, Justice Murray Sinclair, as well as commissioners Marie Wilson and Wilton Littlechild, along with all those who previously served on the commission, as well as those whose immense contribution led us to today.

I would especially like to thank and commend the over 6,750 individuals and residential school survivors who provided the collective voice for the report by sharing their own first-hand accounts, to painstakingly recall and document experiences from the past.

Reading through the "The Survivors Speak" component of the report was particularly powerful for me. When

taking a step back and considering what the individual children must have felt as they were forced into residential schools, you can't help but share part of their pain. To me, this report is about those children.

The first-person accounts of children and the way their families were changed and torn apart by the enrolment in residential schools is truly tragic. Of the over 150,000 First Nations children who passed through the Indian residential school system across Canada, the human toll is staggering. One out of every 25 First Nations children who attended residential schools died there and were buried there, oftentimes without their families being notified.

Just as the legacy of the residential schools spans generations, so too must the subsequent education of future generations. I'm pleased to see the government including that in the school curriculum.

It is our hope that our collective attitude has changed in this country and that greater understanding of the lives and traditions of our aboriginal peoples will continue by building trust and contribute to the healing process.

I was proud in 2008 when Stephen Harper made the historic apology, on behalf of all Canadians, in which the federal government recognized that the great harm caused by Indian residential schools had no place in Canadian society.

I'm also proud that Canada is one of the very few countries in the world where treaty rights are enshrined in our Constitution.

Even with these national strides, it is impossible to read the tragic stories and first-hand accounts without emotion. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we cannot undo what has been done in the past.

The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission will help future generations to learn from this element of our collective history and, in time, bring some closure, we hope, to the terrible legacy of residential schools.

Mr. Speaker, the PC caucus believes that the report is another step along the path to promoting reconciliation between aboriginal and non-aboriginal Canadians, and we look forward to continuing the work it will take to bring forgiveness, healing and true reconciliation to all. Thank you. Meegwetich.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further comments?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: All those who walked yesterday to mark the end of the formal truth and reconciliation process know that when one journey ends, another one often begins. Thanks to the work of the commission, the world now knows more about the pain that the survivors and victims of the Indian residential schools were forced to endure.

New Democrats hope that survivors, their families and the communities forever changed by this terrible legacy can now start new journeys.

Governments all across Canada, including Ontario, must start their own journeys today.

The legacy of residential schools continues to cast a dark shadow over our province. Residential schools denied children the sense of self that comes from being proud of one's heritage, language, culture and traditions.

These children were neglected. They were mistreated. They were abused, and sometimes they were killed.

Tearing families apart, stripping away language and culture, substandard education and the destruction of community, all led to widespread poverty, which remains rampant in First Nations communities today.

For too many, neglect, mistreatment, abuse and death remain the present realities of aboriginal people, particularly women. New Democrats are proud to join with Justice Sinclair in his call for a national inquiry into murdered and missing aboriginal women across this country.

The findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission demonstrate more than simply a historic wrong. They demonstrate an ongoing failure to live up to our responsibilities to care for every person in our province. There are First Nations communities in Ontario that still rely on diesel generation for electricity, that lack access to clean drinking water, proper education, proper health care and good-paying jobs. It is unacceptable that there are people living in Third World conditions in a province as wealthy as ours, Speaker

So, yes, today we do stand on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, but too often that recognition is as close as we get towards realizing our responsibilities to First Nations families.

It is incumbent upon all of us not to allow this report from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to gather dust somewhere on a shelf. This report should be seen as a call to action. It should drive us to recommit to building a stronger relationship—as equals—with First Nations governments and First Nations peoples. We owe it to all of those who suffered and continue to suffer. We owe it to them to continue to work to build a better future together with our First Nations partners—a future based on mutual respect, equality and truth.

I know the minister spoke about the curriculum initiative. I laud the government for that, and I only hope that that curriculum is, in fact, mandatory for every single student in Ontario to participate in, because Canada, Ontario and all of our citizens will be better for it.

Let us each commit today to do our part in this great, historic and ongoing journey of reconciliation.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I thank all members for their comments. I can't help but make a comment myself. I grew up one block away from the Mush Hole. I crossed the playground every day when I went to school, and I didn't know what I was watching. And to some of those who are now friends of mine; I didn't know what was going on. To them, I say I'm sorry. And I thank all of you for the comments that you've made today. Thank you.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO BUDGET

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): It is now time for question period. The member for Nipissing.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Thank you, Speaker. Thank you for your words as well, very emotional words.

My question is for the Premier. Your budget is being presented today for the final vote. In the pre-budget hearings held throughout Ontario we heard from all walks of life. People said, "Do something to help families struggling to pay their hydro bills." Businesses told you, "Get out of our way so we can create jobs and restore the Ontario that you've ruined." But you did neither. Instead, you dug deeper into the pockets of families and seniors and you put forward a bill that makes it even more expensive to do business in Ontario. Premier, why do you continue to refuse to listen to the people of Ontario?

1100

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know that the member opposite was excited when the northern industrial energy rate program was announced as being permanent. I know he understands that that is a real boon to industry in the north. I know that when constituents come to him, he talks to them about the programs that are in place in order to mitigate the cost of hydro. I'm sure that he lets seniors and people on low income know that there are programs in place to support them. I'm sure he lets them know about that.

He also knows that some of those, like making the northern industrial energy rate program permanent, were part of our budget.

I say to the member opposite, there was much in our budget, whether it's the investments in infrastructure, so the roads and bridges in communities in his area and around his community, or whether it's the increase in the minimum wage that will help people in this province—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Premier, it's clear what's actually happened to Ontario under your term. We now have the highest hydro rates in North America. They went up 15% last month alone, and with your fire sale of Hydro One, they're going to rise even higher.

Premier, we have the highest payroll taxes in Canada, and with your pension tax, they are poised to rise even higher. That's why GM, Ford, Chrysler, dozens of industries and our largest retailers banded together with 50 chambers of commerce to say that you're wrong.

We had 2,700 fewer businesses in Ontario last year than the year before. They're not out of business, Premier; they're out of Ontario.

All the experts have told you to change course. Premier, why do you continue to ignore them?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: There is a range of issues that the member opposite has raised, but let me just say to him that it is very important to us to recognize that Ontario, once again this year, is the number one jurisdiction for direct foreign investment in North America. That is a very important fact for us to understand. The conditions that are in place in Ontario are drawing business and drawing industry to the province.

The other issues that he has raised in terms of the need for an enhancement to the pension plan and our response

to the federal government, which is not interested in enhancing the Canada Pension Plan—we are putting forward an Ontario Retirement Pension Plan. That's to solve a problem; the problem is that people cannot save enough. What the business owners have said is, "Be careful with the design."

We are listening to them. We are listening to the business owners across the province. The Associate Minister of Finance is talking to people—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Final supplementary.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Premier, as usual, you say one thing, but the complete opposite is true. Your pension tax will hurt businesses and families. Your Hydro One fire sale will drive up hydro rates and hurt families and seniors.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Economic Development.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: The officers of the Legislature will lose oversight and your Hydro deal will be done in complete secrecy. All this is so you can continue your infrastructure charade. You say you need the money for transit, but it was already in last year's budget without the money from the pension tax and the Hydro fire sale. It's all a ruse. It's all a shell game. You are so desperate for cash, and everybody in this building knows it.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Economic Development, second time.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Premier, will you stand down your final budget vote today and take a long, hard second look at the damage it's going to cause Ontario?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you. Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I think the people of Nipissing alone, but I think many people across the province would also be interested to know that the member opposite and his party think that the Canada Pension Plan is a tax, because that's the extension of what he is saying. He is saying that an enhancement to the Canada Pension Plan, the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan that we would put in place, is a tax. That's not what pensions are. Pensions are about putting an investment—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Please finish.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The young people, the 20-, 30- and 40-year-olds in Nipissing, in Renfrew and across this province, are not able to save enough, even when they have jobs. The fact—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, second time.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: A pension, Mr. Speaker, is not a tax. We are listening to businesses and individuals around the province on the design.

In terms of Hydro One, we are building transit. We are building transportation infrastructure. It was in our budget that one of the ways we were going to pay for that was through—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. John Yakabuski: My question is to the Minister of Energy. Former Premier Dalton McGuinty once said this about privatizing Hydro One: "Selling off a natural public monopoly is a bad idea...."

"It's a quick fix, and it's a bad one...."

"They are prepared to sell off our one and only electricity highway." Perhaps he should have ended by saying, "unless it's the Liberals and they're desperate for cash."

Former Liberal cabinet minister and energy critic Sean Conway said this about the sale of Hydro One: "It is unacceptable that there is no public oversight or accountability." Perhaps he should have clarified this with, "unless hiding things saves the Liberals from future scandals."

Minister, is it not true that you're rushing headlong into the fire sale of Hydro One because you've maxed out the provincial credit cards, and you want to avoid any scrutiny from the Hydro One scandals to come?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The member for Whitby-Oshawa said on March 5, 2015, "As Premier, I will order an immediate review of all assets owned by government...."

"Every dollar made will be invested in new infrastructure right across the province...."

"Let's use the full value of these assets to build the roads, highways, subways and infrastructure that every Ontarian can use."

Let's hear about Patrick Brown when asked about asset modernization: "I generally believe that the private sector can do a better job than the public sector. I generally think market conditions would be helpful for a lot of government agencies."

In the supplementary, I'll speak to their white policy paper.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Back to the minister: We all know that you want the Ombudsman's report into Hydro One's scandalous billing practices to just go away. However, customers of the utility will not soon forget the anxiety and distress that you caused them when the amounts of incorrect bills were automatically withdrawn from their bank accounts, and customer service agents at Hydro One treated them like they were the thieves when they tried to get the errors corrected. Yet no one at Hydro One has been fired, even though customers were often treated with disdain, and managers tried to obfuscate the Ombudsman's investigation.

Minister, is it not time that openness and accountability be restored and those who were in charge of this billing fiasco be terminated?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Energy.

1110

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, I think that's a wake-up call to the truth. The Legislature requires the new Hydro One to set up an office of an ombudsperson. We've retained the former Auditor General of Canada, Denis Desautels, to oversee the implementation of an ombudsman in Hydro One to ensure transparency and accountability.

No government in recent memory has expanded the oversight of independent legislative officers as this government has done. We created the position of the Financial Accountability Officer. We made the French Language Services Commissioner independent. We put into place the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth. We've allocated new powers to the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, and expanded the Ombudsman's role to include oversight of municipalities, school boards and publicly funded—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Final supplementary.

Mr. John Yakubski: That was actually Ontario calling to ask when the truth would be heard from over there.

Minister, Hydro One customers and we in the opposition want decisive action today on the Ombudsman's investigation. Only Liberals would think that an insincere apology was a proportional response to over 10,000 complaints and businesses being overcharged millions of dollars.

After this morning's vote, the officers of the Legislature will no longer be able to hold Hydro One or you accountable. Although you may think you're helping yourself politically by removing this oversight, in reality, without these checks, you will become more arrogant, more reckless, which will lead to even greater scandals in the future. Minister, will you not save yourself from your party's own hubris and allow the Auditor General and the Ombudsman to continue to investigate Hydro One or, for the last chance, remove any reference to it at all from the budget bill?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: As minister, I received the report from the Ombudsman and I referred it to the new chair of Hydro One with a request that it be reviewed to ensure that all recommendations will be implemented, to look at any further issues around the billing issue and customer service issues, and to report back publicly within 40 days.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, the new chair of Hydro One is in the process of selecting a CEO of Hydro One. Myself, as minister, and the chair of Hydro One are in the process of restructuring the board of Hydro One.

We're moving forward with determination—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, the second warning—no, sorry; you're warned.

Wrap-up sentence, please.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, we're moving forward responsibly with determination to reposition an asset which will be invested in infrastructure, billions of dollars of infrastructure, which will not require tax increases or—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. Yesterday the Premier stood in her place, looked me in the eye and said, regarding the sell-off of Hydro One, that "it was very clear in our budget, in our platform and in our budget again that we were looking at assets...." Well, Speaker, going to Niagara Falls and standing in front of the Sir Adam Beck dam is looking at a hydro asset. Looking isn't selling. Recycling isn't selling. Maximizing isn't selling. Unlocking isn't selling.

Will this Premier cut the nonsense and the double-speak and give Ontarians a chance to have their say by holding a referendum on the Hydro One sell-off?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Before I turn to the Premier, I'm going to ask the leader to withdraw.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Withdrawn, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I've read these quotes a number of times, and I'll read them again, one in particular from the 2014 budget. The quote I will read is, "The government will look at maximizing and unlocking value from assets it currently holds, including real estate holdings as well as crown corporations such as Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario."

Actually, those words can encompass a variety of things. That's why those words were used, because at the time of the budget, the decision had not been made as to exactly what we were going to be doing.

That's why we had asked Ed Clark and his group to look at the assets, and by that, I mean—you can have a narrow definition of the denotation of "look," but the connotation of "look" is that we would review, that we would analyze, and that we would then make a decision, and there would be a range of things that we would be considering.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Yesterday, the Premier lectured Ontarians about how she had been clear about her plan to maximize assets. Ontarians heard about recycling, unlocking, leveraging, but not a sell-off. People shouldn't need Google Translate, together with a Magic 8 Ball, to figure out what this Premier is talking about.

The Premier went out of her way to keep Ontarians in the dark about her scheme to sell off Hydro One. That's a fact, Speaker.

Ontarians actually want to be heard. In a democracy, that is not an extraordinary request when we're dealing with one of the biggest policy decisions to come our way in a generation.

Will this Premier do the right thing by the people of Ontario and hold a referendum on the sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What I would say to the leader of the third party is that she just cannot have it both ways. She cannot read, as everyone did, page 257 of our budget, where we said we're "exploring options to unlock the full value of a wide range of valuable provincial assets ... specifically, the LCBO, Hydro One" and OPG, and then go out and say on July 9, 2014, and I quote the leader of the third party, "The budget says in black and white that the government is looking at the sale of assets, 'including ... crown corporations, such as Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario.'"

I do not believe that the leader of the third party was the only person in Ontario who understood that one of the things we were looking at in that range of options was the potential sale of some of those assets.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please. Be seated, please.

Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I've become very accustomed to the wily ways of this government and the way they talk. The Premier did not run on selling Hydro One—end of story. If she doesn't believe that—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock.

Please finish.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: If she doesn't believe that, then she needs to go out to the Tim Hortons in Hamilton, Windsor, Sarnia, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, or, in fact, when she's in the Tim Hortons today in Toronto, I encourage her to ask anyone she meets: Do they remember that this Premier was running on a plan to sell off Hydro One? Do they remember at all voting to sell off Hydro One?

I've been in those communities, and I can tell you I've been hearing from people at town hall meetings across Ontario. Not a single person voted to sell off Hydro One in the province of Ontario.

Will she do the right thing and put this to a referendum?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: If the leader of the third party were as emphatic in her support for transit and transportation infrastructure, I think she would understand why it is so important that we find a way to make those investments. We were very clear that making those investments was a fundamental part of our economic plan—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Government after government in this province, and in jurisdictions around North America, has put off the investment in infrastructure, which is why those same jurisdictions are looking now to find ways to make those investments, because that neglect has set in.

We are not going to wait any longer. We have been building since 2003, and we are going to continue building. But we cannot do that by only borrowing, which is what the leader of the third party would have us do. We were very clear that there are a range of things we need to do. One of them was reviewing assets—

Interjection.

1120

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton Mountain, second time.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: —unlocking value and using that to invest in future assets. That's what we're doing.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Premier. Middle-class families deserve a fair shake. They deserve a hydro system that they can afford. They deserve a hydro system that supports jobs and that actually serves the public interest. But instead of fixing Hydro One, this Premier is handing control to big banks, to offshore investors and to a small group of her powerful friends.

Hon. Brad Duguid: That's fearmongering, total fearmongering.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. The Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure is warned.

Please finish.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: People deserve a say; they deserve a say. Will this Premier put those families ahead of a handful of insiders and give people a say by holding a referendum?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know the Minister of Energy is going to want to comment on the specifics of this, but I know that the people of Ontario know that Hydro One is valuable. That's why the protections that we have put in place are there. We've made it very clear that 40% of this company will remain in public hands.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Timmins—James Bay.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The protections for price controls—the Ontario Energy Board, which sets prices now, will set prices after this arrangement is in place.

We've also made it clear that no single entity or individual will own more than 10%. There are controls over the board that will remain in the hands of the provincial government. Those are the protections that must be in place.

This was a difficult decision, but it is the right decision because if we do not do this, we cannot make the

investments in transit and transportation infrastructure that apparently the third party doesn't think are important.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Earth to Premier: Nobody believes any of that about the 40% and about the 10%. Nobody believes any of that. Earth to Premier: Hydro One is the backbone of our economy. It's what gets electricity to homes and to businesses. People deserve to know that Hydro One is being run in their best interest.

Instead, Hydro One is going to be run to benefit banks, off-shore investors and a small group of the Premier's powerful friends. Giving people their say is the right thing to do in this circumstance.

Can the Premier tell middle-class families why she's more interested in hearing from a small group of powerful insiders than she is in hearing from Ontarians themselves about a sell-off of their Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: To the Minister of Energy.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Mr. Paul Miller: Check your hydro bill in three years and see what it looks like—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek.

Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Over the last eight or nine years, this government has invested over \$33 billion to make the system clean, reliable and affordable. We put ourselves into a surplus position when we had a deficit previously. What we've done with that surplus is create the Industrial Electricity Incentive Program, a program that gives up to 50% off a marginal increase in electricity use to businesses. That includes, for the braying member from Timmins—James Bay, two new gold mines opening in northern Ontario using the IEI Program; last year, Detour Gold opening up a new gold mine, saving \$20 million a particular year; creating jobs in Pembroke at MDFP paper board—140 new jobs; in Whitby, Atlantic Packaging, creating 80 jobs with this program that's based on surplus energy that we have invested in.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: People deserve to know that when the Premier says something, she actually means it. They deserve to know that when the Premier stands up in this Legislature and says, "We are not selling off the assets," the Premier is being honest. It turns out that the Premier is selling Hydro One.

People deserve a Premier who listens to them and who treats them with respect. Will this Premier agree to hold a Hydro One referendum or will she keep telling families in Ontario that she really doesn't care at all what they think?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I think many people in the province of Ontario—certainly everybody on this side of the House—believe that the Premier we have has got the courage to make tough decisions, Mr. Speaker, moving forward. She recognizes that there's an infrastructure deficit across Canada, including in Ontario, and she has put together a 10-year, \$34-billion program to invest in schools and hospitals and transit—

Miss Monique Taylor: Backbenchers for Ed Clark.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton Mountain is warned.

Finish, please

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: It's visionary, Mr. Speaker. It takes a lot of guts to make that type of commitment. It's going to make Ontario more competitive and it's going to increase our quality of life in this province. So I'm pleased to be on this side of the House, where we're doing progress rather than being totally negative.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. New question.

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

Ms. Sylvia Jones: My question is to the Attorney General. Members may not be aware that the Attorney General has decided to pay the legal fees of former justice of the peace Santino Spadafora, to the tune of \$14,000. Spadafora retired days before he was scheduled to appear before the Justices of the Peace Review Council to face a disciplinary hearing for submitting false expenses. There were allegations of 600 false claims for meals, hotels, highway tolls and mileage, in the amount of \$16,000. By retiring, the review council lost jurisdiction over Spadafora because he's not a justice anymore and he avoids the disciplinary hearing. Just so I'm clear, there was no hearing.

Minister, can you explain what justification you used to pay Spadafora's legal fees?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: First of all, thank you for the question. The member is right: Yes, I've made the decision to pay on the recommendation of the Justices of the Peace Review Council.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the Justices of the Peace Review Council has been in place since the 1970s. It's an independent body that has a mandate to receive and investigate complaints against justices of the peace, and to review and approve standards of conduct. Moreover, they have the legislated responsibility to make recommendations to government about compensation for costs associated with hearings.

Yes, the justice of the peace resigned before the hearing, so there was no hearing, and I'll explain in the supplementary why I came to this conclusion.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: It was a recommendation. You're the minister: You actually get to make the decision. A reasonable person would have to believe that the only reason Spadafora chose to retire early was to avoid the

hearing. If the hearing had found him guilty of submitting false claims, he could have been forced to repay that \$16,000. Instead, you want to give him another \$14,000. Looks to me like Spadafora gamed the system to avoid a disciplinary hearing and to avoid repaying the false expense claims. Do the right thing, Minister: Make the decision today that you will not pay his legal fees.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

I want to remind all members that once you are warned, the next time I speak to you, you are named.

Attorney General.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: If the member opposite would have taken the time to read—which is public—the recommendation and the reasoning from the Justices of the Peace Review Council, she will have seen that the justice of the peace—

Ms. Sylvia Jones: He did it to avoid the hearing. He resigns with his—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Dufferin—Carleton, come to order—second time.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: —for different reasons retired before the finding was made. The council noted that in the Canadian system of justice it is not appropriate to assume that there would have been a finding of judicial misconduct.

The work of the justice of the peace's lawyer to narrow the issues ultimately saved considerable costs.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Dufferin—Caledon is warned.

Carry on.

1130

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I have to say that, after he submitted his letter of retirement, none of the work was compensated, to ensure that the process was not being manipulated.

So yes, after consideration, I have decided to follow the review council's consideration—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

New question.

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

Mr. Peter Tabuns: To the Premier: The Liberals are stacking the Ontario Energy Board full of energy insiders and people who have made their careers fighting for higher rates. Marika Hare spent 15 years with Enbridge before she joined the OEB. Then, while at the OEB, she approved a 40% rate increase for her old employer. Now, she's getting a promotion to vice-chair.

The Premier is also appointing former energy lobbyists and a former Hydro One staffer whose job it was to get higher rates.

The Premier is stacking the OEB with energy insiders. The Premier is putting a lot of faith in the OEB, so why is she appointing and promoting energy insiders, instead

of consumer advocates who will stick up for families and businesses?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I don't believe that the member really believes the premise of his question. I know he understands that when you put together a board of directors of 12 or 14 people—

Interjections.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I'm sure he knows that when you put together a board of 12 or 14 people, you get a selection of expertise on that particular board. You want somebody who can chair an audit committee; you want somebody who has experience in the sector, who is an industrial or business experienced person; you need somebody who can understand human resources. You get a composite of people on the board. So we do not apologize for having people on the Ontario Energy Board who understand the sector and can contribute to a board of directors with that level of expertise.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: It's not just that the Premier is stacking the OEB with energy industry insiders; the government is also looking at cutting supports for customer intervenors who help consumers fight for fair energy rates. It is an awfully strange time for the Premier to be mucking around with the inner workings of the OEB at the same time as she's engaging in the biggest hydro sell-off since Mike Harris and Ernie Eves.

At the same time that the Premier is appointing and promoting energy insiders to the OEB and selling off Hydro One to the private sector, why is the Premier looking at stopping intervenors from standing up for consumers at the Ontario Energy Board?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The current chair and CEO of the Ontario Energy Board, Rosemarie Leclair, is an industry insider. She was formerly the CEO of Hydro Ottawa. Hydro Ottawa comes to this particular board looking for rate increases. I haven't heard one person suggest that that background experience puts her in a conflict of interest.

We have credible people on the board. They come from a cross-section of expertise in the community, sometimes from outside the province, sometimes from outside the country, because we want objective people on that board. We want people who understand the industry, who understand consumer advocacy, who understand audits and who understand communications. We have all of that on the Ontario Energy Board, and we make no excuse for that.

PIPELINE

Mr. John Fraser: Ma question est pour le ministre de l'Énergie.

Minister, as you know, TransCanada submitted a project description for the proposed Energy East pipeline project to the National Energy Board. I know that Ontarians, including some of my own constituents in Ottawa South, have voiced their concerns about this proposal:

concerns around potential risks to public safety, our lakes and rivers, and our natural gas supply.

Recent federal legislation has limited the scope and time allotted for National Energy Board hearings and can limit community and public participation in the regulatory process. To that end, I understand that many Ontarians are interested in knowing what role the province will have in the regulatory process.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister please tell the House what role Ontario will play in the hearing process, and what the government is doing to ensure that the voices of Ontarians are heard?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I thank the member from Ottawa South for the question.

Our government believes that it is vital that the National Energy Board only move forward once it adheres to our cabinet-approved principles:

- the highest safety and environmental standards must be met;

- the duty to fully consult with aboriginal and local communities must be met;

- there must be world-leading contingency planning and emergency response programs together with the developer assuming 100% liability for spills;

- they must demonstrate economic benefits and opportunities to the people of Ontario over the short and long term; and

- current consumers of natural gas must be protected with regard to price and supply.

The OEB has engaged with stakeholders, First Nations and Métis communities, and the public, and will complete a report that represents the interests of all Ontarians. This report will inform Ontario's position at the National Energy Board.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. John Fraser: I'd like to thank the minister for that answer.

I know that my constituents who attended the OEB community consultation session appreciated it very much. I attended the consultation myself, and I can state that these were not only a forum for Ontarians to provide their input but also to learn more about the proposed project itself.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario has been proactive in its approach to Energy East, asking the OEB to undertake a review of the application, which is ongoing, and forming a working group with the province of Quebec to identify common interests and positions concerning this project.

Minister, since TransCanada has filed this application with the National Energy Board I believe that it has effectively suspended the application and is amending it to reflect significant changes to the proposal as it was originally filed.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: How is this yet-to-be-seen amended proposal affecting Ontario's ability to review the application and prepare its intervention with the National Energy Board?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, it is vital that all governments take the time to hear from

experts, community and municipal leaders, aboriginal groups, business leaders and other impacted groups.

Just today, the Quebec energy minister and I sent a joint letter to the National Energy Board seeking clarification on a number of areas of shared concern, given that TransCanada is significantly amending its application. Elements of the process have become unclear. We expect and deserve to know exactly what those projects will include, and to have the application supported by the highest degree of rigour, analysis and due diligence. We will not compromise the health and safety of Ontarians.

We look forward to a timely response from the National Energy Board and will actively participate in the federal regulatory process once it formally commences.

ASSISTIVE DEVICES PROGRAM

Ms. Laurie Scott: My question is for the Minister of Health. Minister, as of June 1, the Assistive Devices Program is now facing a \$20-million cut in funding. These cuts were made without any consultation with the industry and with no consideration of the vulnerable individuals who rely on assistive devices like walkers and wheelchairs.

According to the Canadian Assistive Devices Association, Ontarians in need of these products will suffer due to these actions on the part of the Assistive Devices Program.

This \$20-million reduction is yet another example of your government cutting corners, like cutting funding for diabetes test strips, chiropractic care, physiotherapy and cataract surgeries. This is going to have long-term consequences for seniors.

Minister, will you immediately reinstate the program so that assistive devices dealers across Ontario can continue to provide the necessary services for vulnerable people in Ontario?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I appreciate the question.

I'm proud of the fact that this province and this government is providing, through the Assistive Devices Program, support to more than 300,000 Ontarians. In fact, that's an increase of 100,000 people since we came into office in 2003.

The funding that we've provided to the Assistive Devices Program since 2003 has actually increased by 99%. We're providing almost half a billion dollars to those Ontarians who deserve the support and need the support.

I think the member would agree and acknowledge that as technologies evolve, efficiencies are found. We've learned that for some devices we've been overpaying as that technology has evolved. We've also found opportunities by doing a request for proposals or looking at providing them in a more efficient way so that we can also find savings.

1140

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Laurie Scott: We both know that there will be more need, as the age of seniors increases—there are

more seniors in our province. So the reduction in the funding for the Assistive Devices Program will result in further costs to our health care system. I get these concerns in my community office every day. It's yet another example of your government spending a dollar to save a dime. These cuts mean that a grandmother would have to wait three months for funding for a wheelchair or pay out of her own pocket instead of receiving the wheelchair when she needs it. Instead, she's more likely to fall and end up back in the hospital, further costing the system and impacting the quality of her life.

Minister, did you consider the impact that these cuts have on the quality of health care and the long-term implications to our seniors?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: We've certainly considered the impact of our changes in continuing to review the more than 8,000 products that we provide through this program to Ontarians. We've seen and we understand the improved access that they're going to provide, and in many cases it's going to lower the cost to the consumer, to Ontarians, as we continue to review precisely how much we're paying for each one of these items.

We will continue to review the approved costing of the funding products. I think it's a responsible thing for a government to do, to not overpay for certain devices—to pay the appropriate amount for them. These changes, as I mentioned, in many cases will actually result in lower costs for Ontarians.

We'll have an opportunity in a few minutes to make sure the budget passes so we can actually implement these changes, these efficiencies and improvements, so we can provide even more services to Ontarians.

CLASS SIZE

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: My question is to the Premier. On Monday, the Minister of Education claimed that class size caps were not on the table. Yesterday, though, the minister admitted that class size caps are part of negotiations, blaming the president of the school boards association.

Ontarians know that the Premier and her government hold ultimate responsibility over education in this province. The blame game won't work. The Premier and her government need to stand up for families and commit to keeping class size manageable, ensuring high-quality education for our kids. Small class sizes are essential to student learning. Kids don't need less one-on-one time; they need more.

Will the Premier step up and commit to families that there will be no increase to class size caps in the fall? Yes or no?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Education.

Hon. Liz Sandals: The responsibility of the government, which is clear from the legislation, is as the funder. What I can absolutely say is that the funding will be 22 to 1 at secondary, which is what we're talking about. The funding was 22 to 1 last year; the funding is 22 to 1 this year. The funding has been 22 to 1 for the last decade.

The funding was probably 22 to 1 for the decade before that except during the social contract, when it was a totally different system anyway.

So if you're asking me, am I committed to that to which I can commit, which is, "Is the funding going to carry on at 22 to 1?"—absolutely. That's what's in the grants. That's in the money that has been sent to the boards. That is the money that they're basing their budgets—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I think my question was pretty straightforward: Will the minister do her job and protect education or not?

The Premier must tell her minister to step up and stop any changes that would increase class size caps. The minister needs to stop sitting on the sidelines and protect our kids' education in this province. The blame game is growing old, and Ontarians see right through it.

One-on-one time is absolutely crucial to kids' success in school, and frankly, the Premier and her government are well aware of that. Kids with special needs, kids with ESL requirements, kids across the province will pay the price for overcrowded classrooms.

Will the Premier guarantee to all of us in this House that she will not allow any increases to current class size caps?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I'm not sure how many times I can say this: My responsibility is for the funding. The funding last year was \$22.5 million; the funding this year is \$22.5—

Interjection: Billion.

Hon. Liz Sandals: Sorry—last year, \$22.5 billion; this time, \$22.5 billion. The number of students has actually decreased—

Interjections.

Hon. Liz Sandals: Because the number of students in the system is decreasing, when you hold the funding constant, that means the amount of funding per pupil is actually going up.

Now, does every board get exactly the same funding? Of course not. We have boards where the enrolment has gone down 25%. We have other boards where the enrolment has gone up 10%, 20% or 30%. Of course the funding shifts around as the students go down in one board and up in others. The total—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

CHILD POVERTY

Ms. Daiene Vernile: This question is to the minister responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Ending child poverty was a goal of the late writer and activist June Callwood. The Keep the Promise campaign was established two years ago by friends of June to give children a chance to voice their experiences, aspirations and commitment to ending child poverty. They've created videos and practical resources for kids and

teachers in 25 projects across Canada and a website called keepthepromise.ca, which includes a very rich collection of print and video resources.

Ms. Callwood, who came to be known as Canada's conscience, once said that if any of you happens to see an injustice, you are no longer a spectator; you are a participant. I believe that statement holds true today and should always guide the work of our government.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister please inform this House what kind of progress our government is making to reduce child poverty?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you to the member from Kitchener Centre for the question and also for quoting my personal hero, June Callwood.

I commend the Keep the Promise campaign for their work to engage children and their communities in the fight against child poverty. Our government shares their commitment to ensuring that kids get the very best start in life.

While there is certainly much more to do, Speaker, we have made significant strides since introducing our first Poverty Reduction Strategy in 2008. I know the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek will be very happy to know that at last count, 47,000 children and their families have been lifted out of poverty and tens of thousands more have been prevented from falling into poverty—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, last time.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: We've also made progress on each of the eight indicators, including school readiness, standard of living and birth weight.

Under our new Poverty Reduction Strategy, we're recommitting to reducing child poverty by 25% because our children are worth it.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Daïene Vernile: Thank you to the minister for her answer. It's very encouraging to learn that we are making progress when it comes to dealing with the issue of child poverty.

Yesterday, the Keep the Promise campaign hosted June Callwood Children's Day, featuring a colloquium in which students presented their campaign work to end child poverty in Canada. They talked to elected representatives, leaders, and Keep the Promise volunteers on the priorities that lie ahead. Students in grades 5 to 8 were involved in a conference highlighting current issues and opportunities and profiling a child's perspective on poverty, which no doubt was an incredible experience for everyone involved.

Minister, it's inspiring to hear that our government has reaffirmed our commitment to reducing child poverty by 25%. We know that you and your team have been working very hard to achieve this goal.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister please outline some of the other ways in which our government is tackling this very important issue?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'm very pleased to report that we're taking a number of concrete steps that will

reduce child poverty. Beginning in July, the Ontario Child Benefit maximum and income threshold are both being indexed to inflation, raising the maximum benefit to \$1,336 per child—more than double what it was in 2008. Of course, it did not exist before we introduced it.

We've increased the number of student nutrition programs, providing healthy meals to an additional 31,000 children and youths. We've expanded eligibility for Healthy Smiles Ontario. That means 70,000 more kids have access to the dental care that they need.

We're also committed, going forward, to extending health benefits such as prescription drugs, vision care, assistive devices and mental health services to children in low-income families.

1150

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Minister, one month ago, I asked you why my constituent Mr. Jim Lees has to wait months for a bed in a long-term-care facility. I explained that he has gone back and forth between the hospital and the local retirement home, because the home cannot provide the care he needs, as they are not a long-term-care facility—not to mention that the family is paying thousands more each month than they would for nursing home care.

Minister, it has been a month since I asked you that question, yet the situation remains exactly the same: There are still no beds. Mr. Lees is still in the same retirement home, and he's still not receiving the care he needs. In fact, Mr. Lees fell last week and spent a couple of days in the hospital, because he was overmedicated.

Minister, I will ask you the same question I asked you one month ago: Will you help Mr. Lees, or is this yet another example of the health care that seniors can expect under your government?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: To the Associate Minister of Health.

Hon. Dipika Damerla: I thank the member for his advocacy on behalf of his constituent. I want to begin by reminding the member that, as he well knows, my office and his office have been working very hard on this case. The CCAC has been working with the family, to make sure that the best possible care is made available to the resident.

As he well knows, having been a past Minister of Health, I cannot comment on the particulars of this case. But what I can say is that any Ontarian who needs urgent care is placed on the highest priority list for our long-term-care homes and is provided that level of priority care.

I can also remind the member that this government has made historic investments in long-term care. In fact, the member from Sault Ste. Marie just reopened a new long-term-care facility with 50 new beds.

We're continuing to invest. I want to assure the member that we will continue to do everything we can.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jim Wilson: Back to the Minister of Health: Since I raised this issue, Mr. Lees has been offered six idle beds. These are beds that were not on the list of the 12 nursing homes his family has selected. Remember, the family is only required to select three homes, and they've selected 12. One of those beds was in Toronto. One was way up north. Two were not suitable for Mr. Lees's care needs. The others remain a mystery to all of us, as the family was not told where these beds were located.

I say to the minister, I'm not sure how you expect the family to agree to a nursing home bed when even your own ministry can't identify where it is.

Minister, I find it troubling that this man is classified as critical, the highest priority, yet you can't find him a long-term-care bed. I don't believe you just opened 50 new beds. We opened 20,000 new beds in our eight years. You haven't built a gosh-darned thing in your 12 years. Don't you think we need some new nursing home beds in this province—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

Hon. Dipika Damerla: I'd like to again thank the member for his question and remind him that I can't speak to the specifics of this case. I'm happy to speak to him outside. I also note that my office has been working very diligently with his office, and that the CCAC has been working very diligently with the family, to resolve the issue.

But what I can say is that this government has been making significant investments in long-term care. In fact, we have driven down wait times by 34%. And get this, Mr. Speaker: We have driven down wait times by 34%, but when the Conservatives were in power, they did not even measure wait times.

So I'm taking no lessons from the member opposite on this issue. All I can say is that we continue to invest in long-term care, and we are going to be redeveloping 30,000 new beds over the next little while. That's a historic investment in long-term care.

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mr. Gilles Bisson: My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry. Minister, you will know of Little John Enterprises in Timmins. It's a second-generation sawmill that has been operating in our community for a number of years. They have come to you—they have gone to your ministry in the field—in order to be able to get an allocation of timber. All they need is 8,000 cubic metres of wood, of poplar, so that they can continue supplying a niche market they've created that is being supplied out of the mill in Timmins.

I've gone to you; they've gone to you. We've asked you for more wood, and you've written back to us, saying that essentially most of the resource has been allocated.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is this: If you say that most of the wood has been reallocated, why is it that we're shipping 71,000 cubic metres of poplar annually into the province of Quebec and not supplying mills here in Ontario?

Hon. Bill Mauro: I want to thank the member for the question. As he is aware, we have had a fair bit of back-and-forth on this particular issue. In fact, I think it was before Christmas that he first raised it with me, or shortly after I came into the ministry. I asked him to supply me with a note at that time, going back to July or August or September of last year. I never did receive a note from the member on it at that time, so I never heard back from him. So I'm not sure how important it was to him.

Subsequent to that, the member came to me a little while ago. He raised the issue of the particular operation and enterprise in his riding that he is concerned about. I asked him at that time to supply me with some information, which he did, somewhere like four or five or six months after the initial conversation we had had on that particular topic. I finally did get the information specifically from the member. We have responded to the member through a letter, I believe. In fact, I believe I have asked my staff to contact his staff directly to let him know the circumstances. So we're finally aware of the issue from the member—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Hon. Bill Mauro: Speaker, I'll get to more in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, that was the load of loads that I have seen in a long time.

To the minister, I say this: We know that 71,000 cubic metres of wood, poplar, is being shipped unprocessed out of Ontario and into the province of Quebec at the same time that mills in Ontario need that wood. My question to you is simply this: Why should it be such a difficult thing to make an 8,000-cubic-metre allocation to Little John Enterprises when we know that we've got 71,000 cubic metres of poplar being moved out of Ontario and into the province of Quebec?

Hon. Bill Mauro: Speaker, I want to thank the member for the question. I think the issue of wood flows into Quebec is relevant. In fact, for quite some time now, I've asked my staff to get back to me with issues related to that and how it works, and there may be a point in the not-too-distant future where we make some recommendations on that. I would say that wood has flowed into Quebec for decades; this is not new. In fact, a number of people in Ontario receive employment directly as a result of those wood flows.

But more specifically to the issue at the heart of the member's questions, many smaller enterprises across the province have always managed to find the wood allocation that's needed to support their operation through business-to-business relationships. As I understand it, the history on this particular enterprise is exactly that. We have been supporting the efforts of the enterprise with the

district MNR staff through that operation to get some support for them to try to effect a resolution.

I'm not sure why they haven't been able to resolve it. It could be price—I'm not sure, Speaker—but that's obviously something that we don't have—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

New question.

ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: My question is for the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure. As the minister knows, our government must continue to improve accessibility. In fact, in my riding, the Learning Disabilities Association of Halton has done a great job of helping to meet the educational, social and employment needs of young people and adults with learning disabilities.

Currently, one in seven Ontarians has a disability. That number is expected to grow in the coming years. Looking at employment, 55% of Canadians with disabilities believe that hiding their disability increases their chances of getting hired and promoted.

Today, the minister announced our government's accessibility action plan. Would the minister please inform the House about our government's path forward to create an accessible province?

Hon. Brad Duguid: As we reach the halfway point of the AODA's implementation, we have an opportunity to reflect on and celebrate the incredible progress we've made and, at the same time, recalibrate on the path forward to our goal of building an accessible Ontario by 2025. If we continue to lead the country, and we are; if we remain an international leader, and we are; we need to drive a cultural shift across society to improve accessibility.

This morning, I had the privilege of announcing a series of new initiatives to reinvigorate the momentum that's needed to reach our goal to be fully accessible by 2025. We're going to work with employers to try to get there. Included in our initiatives are a couple of new seed capacity funds, including the Community Loans program and the Partnerships for Accessible Employment fund. We're going to get where we need to go, and we're going to reinvigorate momentum in—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Supplementary?

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I would like to thank the minister for the great job that he is doing and for that answer, and, of course, for working so diligently on this very important file.

Improving accessibility is not just the right thing to do for our society, but it's also the smart thing to do for our economy. That's why organizations like Community Living North Halton, which is a group that is working very hard and diligently, day in and day out, work with community partners to offer support and services for people living with a disability, and they're so important. We cannot afford to let any Ontarians fall through the cracks.

As I understand it, Provost Moran has completed her legislative review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. This review was meant to be a guide. Would the minister please inform the House on how Provost Moran's legislative review is helping to guide our path forward?

Hon. Brad Duguid: The second area of focus of our action plan involves adopting key recommendations of Provost Moran's recent review of the AODA.

As recommended by Provost Moran, we're working closely with stakeholders to improve the legislation, including ensuring that the timing between reviews makes sense and that duplication between the two pieces of legislation is also addressed in a number of different ways.

We also recognize that compliance really isn't where it needs to be, so we need to continue to do work on the enforcement side. We're going to be implementing audit blitzes where challenges are present. We're going to be enhancing the effectiveness of our enforcement programs. For 2025, our goal is 1,200 audits.

On the other hand, we know that businesses that champion accessibility ought to be recognized as well. We're going to be putting in place a series of initiatives to do just that: to celebrate successes, as we work towards—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader, on a point of order.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, we had many partners who joined us today on an important announcement dealing with reform of police record-checking in Ontario. Please welcome Jacqueline Tasca and Michelle Keast, from the John Howard Society of Ontario; Camille Quenneville and Uppala Chandrasekera, from the Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario division; and other friends who joined us for the announcement.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Oxford, on a point of order.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Mr. Speaker, in the east gallery today are Shelley Ratelband, who works in my Woodstock constituency office, and her two daughters, Chelsea and Brittany. They're all here from the great riding of Oxford, and I'm pleased to welcome them to Queen's Park. I hope they have a great day here.

DEFERRED VOTES

BUILDING ONTARIO UP ACT
(BUDGET MEASURES), 2015

LOI DE 2015 POUR FAVORISER
L'ESSOR DE L'ONTARIO
(MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts / Projet de loi 91, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1203 to 1208.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All members, please take your seats.

On June 2, 2015, Mr. Sousa moved third reading of Bill 91.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Meilleur, Madeleine
Anderson, Granville	Fraser, John	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Baker, Yvan	Gravelle, Michael	Moridi, Reza
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoggarth, Ann	Murray, Glen R.
Ballard, Chris	Hoskins, Eric	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hunter, Mitzie	Naqvi, Yasir
Bradley, James J.	Jaczek, Helena	Oraziotti, David
Chan, Michael	Kiwal, Sophie	Potts, Arthur
Chiarelli, Bob	Kwinter, Monte	Qaadri, Shafiq
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Marie-France	Rinaldi, Lou
Coteau, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Crack, Grant	Malhi, Harinder	Sergio, Mario
Damerla, Dipika	Mangat, Amrit	Sousa, Charles
Del Duca, Steven	Marlins, Cristina	Takhar, Harinder S.
Delaney, Bob	Matthews, Deborah	Thibeault, Glenn
Dhillon, Vic	Mauro, Bill	Vernile, Daiene
Dickson, Joe	McGarry, Kathryn	Wong, Soo
Dong, Han	McMahon, Eleanor	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Duguid, Brad	McMeekin, Ted	Zimmer, David

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Hardeman, Ernie	Nicholls, Rick
Arnott, Ted	Harris, Michael	Pettapiece, Randy
Bailey, Robert	Hatfield, Percy	Sattler, Peggy
Barrett, Toby	Hillier, Randy	Scott, Laurie
Bisson, Gilles	Horwath, Andrea	Singh, Jagmeet
Campbell, Sarah	Hudak, Tim	Smith, Todd
Clark, Steve	Jones, Sylvia	Tabuns, Peter
DiNovo, Cheri	MacLeod, Lisa	Taylor, Monique
Dunlop, Garfield	Mantha, Michael	Thompson, Lisa M.
Fedeli, Victor	Marlow, Gila	Vanhof, John
Fife, Catherine	McDonell, Jim	Walker, Bill
Forster, Cindy	McNaughton, Monte	Wilson, Jim
French, Jennifer K.	Miller, Norm	Yakabuski, John
Gates, Wayne	Miller, Paul	Yurek, Jeff
Gélinas, France	Munro, Julia	
Gretzky, Lisa	Natyshak, Taras	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 57; the nays are 46.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): As is the convention, no one interrupts a vote, but I am standing to say

that I am reminding all members that pictures are forbidden in this place.

There are no further deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1213 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: It's a pleasure today to introduce the executive director of Ontario Agri-Food Education, Colleen Smith, and her colleague, Taylor Selig. We've had a good day today. They were joined by Keith Currie, of OFA, as well as Brandon Ashmore, of the Canadian Beverage Association.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: We're joined this afternoon by a friend of mine from Windsor-Tecumseh. Her name is Mary Ann Mulhern. She's an award-winning poet, and we'll have more to say about Mary Ann in a couple of minutes. Welcome to Queen's Park.

By the way, I believe David Lepofsky, of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance, will be joining us. And from Signs Restaurant, Anjan and Manny Manikumar and Rachel Shemuel will be signing for us today. We may also be joined by Luke Anderson and Lorin MacDonald.

Ms. Soo Wong: I have a lot of guests here this afternoon, so I am going to take my time to introduce them.

From my riding of Scarborough-Agincourt: Jean He, Samuel Wong, Fiona Siu, June Ong, Hilla Master, Alice Wang, Lai Chu, Bejoy Das and Pratima Das.

Glemina Bettencourt, who ran with Terry Fox on his run; Alisa Van Der Toorn, who is a teacher at Terry Fox Public School; Eddie Yu, a Terry Fox Run volunteer from Team Toronto; and Jordon Hill, a Terry Fox runner from Toronto Island.

Councillor Pam Damoff, from the city of Oakville.

Glynis Henry and Geri Berholz.

From the Terry Fox Foundation: Bruna Raimondo, Steven Smyth and Jacqueline Gillis.

From the Canadian Cancer Society, Nicole McInerney, and Councillor Jon Hurst, a councillor for Halton Hills and a pioneer of the Terry Fox Run for 35 years who was an original runner with Terry Fox.

Welcome, each one of you, to Queen's Park.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Like my colleague, I'll ask the indulgence of the House, as I have a number of guests who are here today for the conversation on Bill 13.

I'd like to start by introducing Pam Damoff, who is a councillor in the city of Oakville, and also here for my bill.

Dave McLaughlin, a partner at the MMM Group; Chris Drew, who lives in Brampton and is a cycling enthusiast; Jacquelyn Hayward Gulati, who is the cycling coordinator from the city of Toronto; Howard Brown; Jared Kolb, the ED of Cycle Toronto; Justin Jones, from Share the Road Cycling Coalition, now a resident of Belleville; Elliott Silverstein, from CAA; my brother Ed McMahon; and Yvonne Bambrick, who is an author and

cyclist in the city of Toronto. Welcome, colleagues. Thank you for being at Queen's Park.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I ask all members of the House to join me in welcoming some members in the public gallery who organized a wonderful rally today in defence of accident benefits. Their names are Pam Forester, Sarah Palmer, Ruth Fernandes and Jordan Hill. Please join me in welcoming them.

Mr. Arthur Potts: I, too, would like to introduce Howard Brown, who many years ago came second to me in the presidential race for the Young Liberals in Rose-dale. Welcome, Mr. Brown.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order, please. Thank you.

Mr. Yvan Baker: I just wanted to acknowledge somebody who is on her way, if she's not here already, and that's my EA, Theresa Lubowitz, who has been a fantastic support to me on a private member's bill. I want to thank her—she's not here yet.

I also want to acknowledge Howard Brown, a good friend and supporter as well.

Interjection: There she is.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Oh, there she is. Hi, Theresa.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome. We're glad you're not here.

Further introductions?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I'd like to introduce a good friend of mine—I think he's a New Democrat—Howard Brown, who's in the audience here today.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, I'm not sure if he has been introduced yet, but in the gallery is a good friend of the PC Party, Howard Brown.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further comical introductions?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to acknowledge Howie Brown. In 1991, when I was an opposition member, he prepared a householder for me which was complaining about the price of gasoline at 47 cents a litre.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further introductions of Howard Brown? I mean, further introductions? The member from Burlington.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Actually, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to reintroduce Howard Brown, although he is welcome and we're glad he's here.

WEARING OF PINS

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent that I be permitted to wear a Share the Road Cycling Coalition bike lapel pin for this afternoon's proceedings.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Burlington is seeking unanimous consent to wear a pin—and I will pause for a moment to allow the member from Timmins–James Bay a counter.

I think we need to do this, so go ahead.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Mr. Speaker, we're not going to oppose it, but I would just ask the government House

leader not to spring these things on us. I know the Conservative House leader has just been made aware a few seconds ago. I had no idea. There is a process. Normally, the House leader tells us before any of this stuff happens. We will give consent, but I ask the House leader not to do this.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I suspect it's not the House leader who's doing this. But I do agree with the member that it is a tradition that any unanimous requests for wearing of things are done through the House leaders to ensure that no one offends anyone and is made to look like they are doing it on purpose.

What I'm going to do is ask for unanimous consent for the member, now that we know that this point has been made. Do we agree with unanimous consent? Agreed.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Point of order from the member from Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I would ask that we have unanimous consent in order to wear ribbons for Howard Brown.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Some people have the opinion that I lost control of the House as soon as I became Speaker. But under this circumstance, I think I'm going to pass on that UC.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Windsor–Tecumseh.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you, Speaker. Earlier, I introduced some guests, and they hadn't quite arrived. If I could just mention to you that David Lepofsky is here, as well as Anjan and Manny Manikumar, and Rachel Shemuel, who will be signing for us this afternoon.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ACADÉMIE CATHOLIQUE ANGE-GABRIEL

M. Steve Clark: Comme l'année scolaire tire à sa fin, je voudrais souligner quelques réussites de l'Académie catholique Ange-Gabriel à Brockville. C'est avec le bon travail des professeurs que les élèves peuvent s'épanouir et profiter davantage de leur expérience académique. Pour cela, j'aimerais premièrement les remercier.

Cette année, comme toujours, a été très mouvementée et très variée. Un des temps forts de l'année a été la compétition de Mini Skills, qui a encouragé les étudiants à s'intéresser aux domaines de métiers spécialisés et aux technologies.

« Dévoile ton art » a inspiré les élèves à s'essayer comme poètes et « We Day » comme activistes sociales. La classe de 6^e année a même exploré leurs talents scientifiques à la foire de science de Rideau St. Lawrence.

En septembre, l'école célébrera sa 20^e rentrée. Alors, je veux dire à tous les élèves et les professeurs de l'Académie catholique Ange-Gabriel : félicitations pour votre travail cette année et passez de belles vacances. Je suis certain que vous continuerez à réussir et à faire plein de choses intéressantes l'année prochaine.

1510

MARY ANN MULHERN

Mr. Percy Hatfield: As I mentioned earlier, we are joined in the members' gallery today by Mary Ann Mulhern. Mary Ann is an award-winning poet from Windsor whose work I have quoted here in the House on at least two previous occasions.

It was her idea to create the position of a Poet Laureate in Windsor a few years ago. I was on city council when we did that. That experience prompted me to introduce a private member's bill to create the position of Poet Laureate for Ontario.

Mary Ann has written a poem called Windsor, and, with her permission, I'd like to read it to you now.

Windsor

A river seeded with light

Radiance of sun and stars

Flows through the heart of Windsor

Gives breath to ten thousand roses

Reflects the face of a city

Created from Strength

Men, women and children

Enough faith to endure

Enough hope to build bridges

Span of this millennium

When Windsor thrives, grows, glories

In so many colours of the world

How they shine!

Thank you, Mary Ann, for being here today. Thank you for promoting poetry, literacy and the arts. Thank you for reminding others how great it would be if we finally had a Poet Laureate in Ontario.

ONTARIO FLAG DAY

JOUR DU DRAPEAU DE L'ONTARIO

Mr. Yvan Baker: Three weeks ago today, I rose in the House to introduce Bill 101, An Act to proclaim Ontario Flag Day. This legislation, if passed, would proclaim that May 21 in each year be recognized as Ontario Flag Day. I would humbly ask for the support of all members in this House for this bill.

First raised on May 21, 1965, the Ontario flag symbolizes the contributions of our people, our rich history, our diverse heritage, distinct values and shared successes. It represents all of us who call Ontario home.

Le drapeau de l'Ontario est le symbole à la fois des contributions de notre peuple, de notre histoire féconde, de notre patrimoine diversifié, de nos valeurs distinctes et de nos succès communs.

From the early aboriginal people who first called this land home, to anglophone and francophone settlers, to the millions of immigrants who continue to arrive on our shores from around the world, Ontario has a rich history and diverse heritage.

Millions of people, including my grandparents, chose to come to this province because they wanted a better life for their family and for the generations that would follow. They found that in Ontario. In fact, my grandfather used to say that this is the best place in the world.

Ontarians from across our province continue to make contributions to the economic, social, political and cultural life of our province, our country and the world.

Rendre hommage au drapeau de l'Ontario nous permet de célébrer tous les citoyens de l'Ontario et leurs innombrables contributions, tout en honorant notre histoire, le patrimoine, les valeurs et les réussites.

It is my hope that all members of this Legislature will support this legislation and join me in marking May 21 in their calendars each year not just to celebrate Ontario Flag Day—although this is important—and not just to celebrate our history, heritage, values and shared successes—although this, too, is important—but to pay tribute to the people of Ontario who continue to make Canada and Ontario the best places in the world.

AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Today, I launched an awareness program for my private member's initiative known as Growing Agri-Food Jobs, and I do it in celebrating the Local Food Week that we have upon us right now.

I'd like to share with the House that Ontario's agri-food industry is vital to the province, contributing \$30 billion annually to Ontario's GDP and providing 740,000 jobs. Yet, despite this important economic aspect of our agri-food industry, we actually have a low-job profile, if you will, amongst students across Ontario. That's why I introduced my motion Growing Agri-Food Jobs in Ontario.

The motion asks that the importance of agriculture and food literacy is recognized by ensuring that the Ministry of Education includes a mandatory component of career opportunities associated with Ontario's agri-food industry in grades 9 and 10 guidance and career education.

With that, I am very pleased to say that this motion will enable the Premier to realize a goal. When she was Minister of Agriculture and Food, she challenged the agri-food industry to create 120,000 new jobs. Yet, unfortunately, studies show that for every one person graduating with an agricultural diploma or degree, there are three jobs waiting.

So this has been received very well by the NDP, as well as the Liberal Party. I look forward to the debate on October 8 during Agriculture Week later this fall.

FORT ERIE RACE TRACK

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yesterday I was happy to attend the opening of the Fort Erie Race Track, which is

celebrating its 118th year. With post time at 4:15, we had nine races that saw an increase in both track betting and off-track betting. I can tell you—I was there last year—attendance was up and sales were up.

The residents of Niagara had a great time yesterday. They want to keep having a great time. That's why we need more race dates. Forty is a good start from where we were, but we need 77 race dates.

We also need to return gaming to the track in the form of slots. With the slots back and more race dates, the track can become self-sustaining and not need a dollar from the province or the town.

Three years ago, the Premier committed to integrated horse racing with OLG, including gaming, which would bring the slots back to Fort Erie. In fact, it was the Premier's idea. There are over 1,000 jobs that could be protected there and 200 that could be created with the return of gaming to Fort Erie. That's jobs for the community that are absolutely needed. By returning gaming to Fort Erie, the province generates revenue and the town gets to keep their race track.

This is something that needs to happen now, so that we can continue to see more days like the very successful day we had at the Fort Erie Race Track yesterday.

ANNIVERSARY OF BARRIE TORNADO

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: This past Sunday was the 30th anniversary of the Barrie tornado. On May 31, 1985, a series of tornadoes swept across the province of Ontario, with the most devastation occurring in central Ontario and my hometown of Barrie. It was a challenging day in our history, with 12 dead, 281 injured and close to 600 homes and businesses lost or damaged.

At 4:15, a powerful F4 tornado, with winds between 270 and 310 kilometres per hour, formed in Grand Valley, eventually travelling to Barrie. It was a defining moment in our community as neighbours came together to help support each other and help to rebuild.

At Royal Victoria hospital, those who were injured sat silent and patiently, covered in blood and mud. Ambulances rushed more in as good Samaritans brought others in pickup trucks. Portable lights were brought in and sheets were placed over tables in the cafeteria as it was used for assessment and treatment.

Nurses and doctors returned from already working a full day to do their job again. Police officers, firefighters, paramedics and soldiers from nearby Base Borden worked tirelessly to get Barrie citizens through this very difficult time.

In the weeks ahead, neighbours took in those who had lost their homes and the city began to rebuild.

Barrie's tornado devastation was significant, but it revealed an even stronger resolve and a sense of community. This resilience is still part of our community today.

Thanks to all of the unsung heroes who acted on this very devastating day.

LAKE NIPISSING WALLEYE FISHERY

Mr. Victor Fedeli: This week, the Lake Nipissing stakeholders wrote directly to the Premier out of desperation and frustration. They're at a loss to understand how the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry turned down their request to continue to restock Lake Nipissing, as they've done for years, to reverse the decline of the walleye population.

The ministry is entrenched in its position on Lake Nipissing. Yet, on its website, they boast the fact that they help stock 1,200 other water bodies in Ontario each and every year. The refusal to allow stakeholders, at their own expense, to augment stocking efforts proves that the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing at the ministry.

Lake Nipissing is one of the most ecologically and economically important lakes in northeastern Ontario. But instead of working with partners to find solutions, the ministry just digs in its heels.

The stakeholders' petition is now available for constituents to sign in my office and on my website.

The Premier needs to act and the minister needs to start asking his staff some hard questions. They should allow the stakeholders to continue to restock—again, at their own expense, as they always have—while submitting the ministry's data and conclusions for a third-party scientific review to explain how it's acceptable to stock 1,200 other Ontario water bodies but not Lake Nipissing.

1520

GIRLS GOVERNMENT

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I rise today to showcase the fantastic girls in grades 7 and 8 at Rawlinson Community School who took part in my Girls Government program. Girls Government is a program run by Equal Voice, which helps get young girls interested in politics. I worked closely with five bright young girls from Rawlinson Community School—Ryann, Sana, Alyssa, Penelope, Cheyenne—and their teacher, Mrs. Emily Praamsma.

Since January, these girls worked alongside me and their teacher to learn about politics and to select a specific issue they'd like to champion. The girls selected mental health as their issue. Each of the girls engaged in lively debates selecting this issue. As well, they developed strategies on what we can do as a province to remediate this issue.

With much research and discussion, these bright young girls from Rawlinson drafted a letter to Minister Hoskins indicating their specific concerns and perspectives on the provision of mental health care in Ontario.

On May 27, I was happy to host my group here at Queen's Park, and I'm so happy that they had an opportunity to meet with Premier Wynne, with you, Mr. Speaker, and several MPPs throughout the day.

I'd like to extend a special thanks to Minister Hoskins, who personally met with the girls from Rawlinson to

discuss how our government is working to tackle the issue of mental health.

Mr. Speaker, the energy from the girls from Rawlinson helped remind me of the importance of my role as a female politician in this Legislature, and as the first female MPP for the riding of Davenport. I want to thank them for their hard work, and I look forward to their bright careers going forward as active, engaged citizens in Davenport.

GREAT BLUE HERON CHARITY CASINO

Mr. Granville Anderson: I would like to acknowledge today, for the residents of Durham and all of Ontario, the success of the MSIFN, the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation. I have the opportunity to meet regularly with Chief Kelly LaRocca, who never misses an opportunity to tell me about the MSIFN community and the charity casino that they own: the Great Blue Heron Charity Casino in Durham region. It's a famous achievement in the Durham community and remains a great success for MSIFN as well as our entire region.

Great Blue Heron was financed, built and developed by the MSIFN as a result of a nation-to-nation agreement with the government of Ontario. The agreement was signed in 1993, and the casino opened in 1997. With the agreement came the opportunity for the MSIFN to initiate economic development and financial self-reliance. Overall, GBH has direct and indirect economic benefits to the region of \$264 million annually and generates more than 1,100 jobs.

This unique asset in Durham represents independence and opportunity to the MSIFN, and it has proven to be a phenomenal success.

My hope is that you will take the time to visit this wonderful casino.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'd like to thank all members for their statements and introduce Howard Brown in the gallery.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Anne Stokes): Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr20, An Act to amend The Welland-Port Colborne Airport Act, 1976.

Bill Pr21, An Act to revive Weiche Estates Inc.

Bill Pr22, An Act to revive 1476263 Ontario Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed. Carried.

Report adopted.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I beg leave to present a report on University Undergraduate Teaching Quality, section 4.11 of the 2014 Annual Report of the Auditor General of Ontario, from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Hardeman presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations.

Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Mr. Speaker, as Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, I'm pleased to table the committee's report today, entitled University Undergraduate Teaching Quality, section 4.11, 2014 Annual Report of the Auditor General of Ontario.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the permanent membership of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts: Lisa MacLeod, Vice-Chair; Han Dong; John Fraser; Percy Hatfield; Harinder Malhi; Julia Munro; Arthur Potts; and Lou Rinaldi.

The committee extends its appreciation to officials from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Brock University, the University of Ontario Institute of Technology and the University of Toronto for their attendance at the hearing.

The committee also acknowledges the assistance provided during the hearings and report-writing deliberations by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, the Clerk of Committees, and staff in the legislative research services.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of the debate.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Hardeman has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Debate adjourned.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

POLICE RECORD CHECKS REFORM ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA RÉFORME DES VÉRIFICATIONS DE DOSSIERS DE POLICE

Mr. Naqvi moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 113, An Act respecting police record checks /
Projet de loi 113, Loi concernant les vérifications de
dossiers de police.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for a short statement.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce the Police Record Checks Reform Act. This bill, if passed, would develop a clear, consistent and comprehensive legislative framework for police record checks for the first time in Ontario, setting province-wide standards for how police record checks are requested, conducted and disclosed in Ontario.

This bill will establish set types of police record checks, direct what records can and cannot be released, and clarify rules and practices for consent and disclosure.

If passed, the legislation will remove unnecessary barriers and increase opportunities for employment, volunteering, education and other community service while protecting both public safety and individual civil liberties.

MUNICIPAL ACTION

ON ACCESSIBILITY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR L'ACTION MUNICIPALE EN FAVEUR DE L'ACCESSIBILITÉ POUR LES PERSONNES HANDICAPÉES

Mr. Hatfield moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 114, An Act to require municipalities to take action with respect to accessibility for persons with disabilities / Projet de loi 114, Loi exigeant que les municipalités prennent des mesures en matière d'accessibilité pour les personnes handicapées.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: This bill grew out of the controversy over the ramp on the sidewalk at Signs Restaurant in downtown Toronto. The bill prohibits municipalities from taking any action that impedes a person who offers items, including goods, services and facilities, from improving accessibility to the items for Ontarians with disabilities.

The bill requires municipalities to conduct a review of bylaws and other instruments and to report and plan in respect of complying with the bill.

MOTIONS

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 13

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding Bill 13, An Act to proclaim the month of June as Ontario Bike Month.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I move that the July 17, 2014, order of the House referring Bill 13, An Act to proclaim the month of June as Ontario Bike Month, to the Standing Committee on Social Policy be discharged, and the bill ordered for third reading, and that the order for third reading of Bill 13 be immediately called and the question be put on the motion for third reading without debate or amendment.

1530

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that the July 17, 2014—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Dispense.

All in favour? Agreed? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

ONTARIO BIKE MONTH ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LE MOIS DE LA BICYCLETTE EN ONTARIO

Ms. McMahon moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 13, An Act to proclaim the month of June as Ontario Bike Month / Projet de loi 13, Loi proclamant le mois de juin Mois de la bicyclette en Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Do we agree? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 61

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding Bill 61, An Act to proclaim Terry Fox Day.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that the March 26, 2015, order of the House referring Bill 61, An Act to proclaim Terry Fox Day, to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills be discharged and that the bill be ordered for third reading; and that the order for third reading of Bill 61 be immediately called and that the question be put on the motion for third reading without debate or amendment.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that the March 26, 2015, order—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Dispense.

Do we agree? Agreed. Carried.

Motion agreed to.

TERRY FOX DAY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LE JOUR DE TERRY FOX

Ms. Wong moved third reading of the following bill:
Bill 61, An Act to proclaim Terry Fox Day / Projet de loi 61, Loi proclamant le Jour de Terry Fox.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Do we agree? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 101

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding Bill 101, An Act to proclaim Ontario Flag Day.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that the orders for second and third reading of Bill 101 be immediately called and that the question be put on the motions for second and third reading without debate or amendment.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that the orders for second and third reading of Bill 101—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Agreed. Do we agree? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

ONTARIO FLAG DAY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LE JOUR
DU DRAPEAU DE L'ONTARIO

Mr. Baker moved second reading of the following bill:
Bill 101, An Act to proclaim Ontario Flag Day / Projet de loi 101, Loi proclamant le Jour du drapeau de l'Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Do we agree? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

ONTARIO FLAG DAY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LE JOUR
DU DRAPEAU DE L'ONTARIO

Mr. Baker moved third reading of the following bill:
Bill 101, An Act to proclaim Ontario Flag Day / Projet de loi 101, Loi proclamant le Jour du drapeau de l'Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Do we agree? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot item numbers 60, 61 and 62 be waived.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Do we agree? Agreed. Carried.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

CURRICULUM

Ms. Sylvia Jones: From my Girls Government program, this is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from the Princess Margaret Public School Girls Government group:

"Whereas there is an increasing level of obesity and childhood diabetes in teenagers in Ontario;

"Whereas only 15% of Canadians come close to the recommended levels of physical activity on a daily basis;

"Whereas over the course of a year, one in five Canadians experience a mental health or addiction problem;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Ministry of Education as follows:

"That the province make the Healthy and Active Living course offered to students in Ontario high schools a compulsory course selection for all four years of high school education."

I will affix my name to the petition and give it to page Emma to take to the table.

ACCIDENT BENEFITS

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I want to commend the work of the Accident Benefit Coalition for putting together this petition. They have 19,000 petitions signed online, and I have almost 600 signatures to present today. The petition reads as follows:

"Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Stop Further Cuts to Accident Benefits.

"Whereas in 2010 the Ontario government permitted insurance companies to dramatically cut accident benefits for all victims and has announced plans on allowing even further reductions;

"Whereas this will severely impact on Ontario's most vulnerable victims of car crashes;

"Whereas those injured in car accidents depend on accident benefits for recovery;

"Whereas when someone is catastrophically impaired, they will require these benefits to help them afford their daily expenses indefinitely;

"Whereas reducing accident benefits will put further strain on the health care system;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly undertakes legislative reforms to halt the proposed changes to accident benefits in Ontario."

I strongly support and agree with this petition, and will affix my signature and hand it to page Philip.

UNLICENSED TAXIS

Mr. Vic Dhillon: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas consumer choice is key, provided passenger safety is paramount for taxi programs;

"Whereas bandit taxicabs that are not licensed or insured pose safety threats for passengers and other drivers;

"Whereas unsafe bandit taxicabs predate programs like Uber, who are using new technology;

"Whereas legitimate taxi programs uphold the safety measures within municipal bylaws and the Highway Traffic Act; and

"Whereas municipalities must be able to enforce their own bylaws;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enact passenger safety legislation that will stop unlicensed taxis from operating."

I hand this over to page Jany and I affix my signature to this.

ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES

Mr. Randy Hillier: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas electronic cigarettes, more accurately known as vaporizers, are between 95% and 99% cleaner than smoking tobacco; and

"Whereas electronic cigarettes are not a tobacco product, but rather a tobacco replacement therapy for those wishing to quit smoking, and a significant contributor to tobacco harm reduction in Ontario; and

"Whereas there is no scientific or medical evidence indicating that vaping causes inhalable exposure to contaminants that warrants health concerns;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario abandon schedule 3 of Bill 45, Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2014."

I have received over 4,000 signatures on the electronic petition as well as hundreds and hundreds of these. I agree with it and will give it to page Dale.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. John Fraser: I have a petition collected by the students at Meadowvale Public School in Mississauga.

"Elimination of Microbeads from Cosmetic Products.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas microbeads are tiny plastics less than one millimetre in diameter which pass through our water filtration systems and get into our rivers and the Great Lakes; and

"Whereas these microbeads represent a growing presence in our Great Lakes and are contributing to the plastic pollution of our freshwater lakes and rivers; and

"Whereas the scientific research and data collected to date has shown that microbeads that get into our water system collect toxins and organisms mistake these microbeads for food and these microbeads can move up our food chain;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Mandate the Ontario government to ban the creation and addition of microbeads to cosmetic products and all other related health and beauty products; and

"The Ministry of the Environment conduct an annual study of the Great Lakes analyzing the waters for the presence of microbeads."

I agree with this petition. I'm affixing my signature to it and giving it to page Julien.

1540

LAKE NIPISSING WALLEYE FISHERY

Mr. Victor Fedeli: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry has stated that the walleye population in Lake Nipissing is in decline; and

"Whereas their answer is to manage through the recreational fishing regulations; and

"Whereas that is not a viable solution if the commercial fishery on Lake Nipissing is not regulated; and

"Whereas the Lake Nipissing Stakeholders Association wants to restock the lake at large volumes to replenish the waning walleye population, but is not being allowed to do so by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry despite the fact the ministry commits to stocking 1,200 other water bodies in Ontario each and every year;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to allow the Lake Nipissing Stakeholders Association to restock Lake Nipissing with walleye to protect our local fishery for future generations."

I wholeheartedly agree with this, sign my name and give it to page Emma.

MISSING PERSONS

Ms. Catherine Fife: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario does not have missing persons legislation; and

"Whereas police are not able to conduct a thorough investigation upon receipt of a missing person report where criminal activity is not considered the cause; and

"Whereas this impedes investigators in determining the status and possibly the location of missing persons; and

"Whereas this legislation exists and is effective in other provinces; and

"Whereas negotiating rights to safety that do not violate rights to privacy has been a challenge in establishing missing persons law;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We ask that the Attorney General's office work with the office of the privacy commissioner to implement missing persons legislation that grants investigators the opportunity to apply for permissions to access information that will assist in determining the safety or whereabouts of missing persons for whom criminal activity is not considered the cause."

It's my pleasure to affix my signature and give this petition to page Robert.

LUNG HEALTH

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The minister from—the member from Davenport.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I like the way you're thinking.

I have a petition here addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads:

"Whereas lung disease affects more than 2.4 million people in the province of Ontario, more than 570,000 of whom are children. Of the four chronic diseases responsible for 79% of deaths (cancers, cardiovascular diseases, lung disease and diabetes) lung disease is the only one without a dedicated province-wide strategy;

"In the Ontario Lung Association report, Your Lungs, Your Life, it is estimated that lung disease currently costs the Ontario taxpayers more than \$4 billion a year in direct and indirect health care costs, and this figure is estimated to rise to more than \$80 billion seven short years from now;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To allow for deputations on MPP Kathryn McGarry's private member's bill, Bill 41, the Lung Health Act, 2014, which establishes a Lung Health Advisory Council to make recommendations to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care on lung health issues and requires the minister to develop and implement an Ontario Lung Health Action Plan with respect to research, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of lung disease; and

"Once debated at committee, to expedite Bill 41, the Lung Health Act, 2014, through the committee stage and back to the Legislature for third and final reading; and to

immediately call for a vote on Bill 41 and to seek royal assent immediately upon its passage."

I agree with this petition. I'm going to sign it and send it to the table with page Dale.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Randy Hillier: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in her 2014 annual report, the Ontario Auditor General confirmed what Ontario electricity consumers already knew, that our energy system has been woefully mismanaged by this Ontario government and we have been gouged with rates and charges to compensate for their mismanagement; and

"Whereas Minister Chiarelli prefers to criticize the truth rather than take responsibility for this mismanagement;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Premier of Ontario demand her energy minister's resignation immediately."

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads:

"Whereas Highway 3 from Windsor to Leamington has long been identified as dangerous and unable to meet growing traffic volumes; and

"Whereas the widening of this highway passed its environmental assessment in 2006; and

"Whereas the portion of this project from Windsor to west of the town of Essex has been completed, but the remainder of the project remains stalled; and

"Whereas there has been a recent announcement of plans to rebuild the roadway, culverts, lighting and signals along the portion of Highway 3 that has not yet been widened;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To revisit plans to rebuild Highway 3 from Essex to Leamington and direct those funds to the timely completion of the already approved widening of this important roadway in Essex county."

I approve and support this petition, and will affix my name and send it to the Clerks' table through Ram.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Mr. Arthur Potts: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees access to publicly funded French-language education; and

"Whereas there are more than 1,000 children attending French elementary schools in east Toronto," including Beaches–East York, "and those numbers continue to grow; and

“Whereas there is no French secondary school ... yet in east Toronto, requiring students wishing to continue their studies in French school boards to travel two hours every day to attend the closest French secondary school...; and,

“Whereas it is well documented that children leave the French-language system for the English-language system between grades 7 and 9 due to the inaccessibility of French-language secondary schools...; and

“Whereas the Ontario government acknowledged in February 2007 that there is an important shortage of French-language schools in all of Toronto...; and

“Whereas the commissioner of French-language services stated in a report in June 2011 that ‘... time is running out to address the serious shortage’...; and

“Whereas the Ministry of Education has confirmed that we all benefit when school board properties are used effectively in support of publicly funded education...; and

“Whereas parents and students from both French Catholic and French public elementary schools in east Toronto are prepared to find common ground across all language school systems to secure space...;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Minister of Education assist one or both French school boards in locating a suitable underutilized school building in east Toronto that may be sold or shared for the purpose of opening a French secondary school” in the community so that French students have a secondary school close to where they live.

I agree with this petition and leave it with page Kate.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I have a petition prepared by my Girls Government group from Island Lake Public School.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government should provide funds for community hospitals all across Ontario. The reasoning behind this issue is the residents of Ontario pay taxes towards the hospital which doesn’t provide any extra equipment like X-ray machines, CT scanners or dialysis machines;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Legislature ask the government to provide funds for all supplies for all hospitals, including community hospitals, all across Ontario.”

I will affix my name to this petition and give it to page Philip to take to the table.

PRIVATISATION DES BIENS PUBLICS

M^{me} France Gélinas: J’ai une pétition qui vient de partout en Ontario, incluant le carré Yonge-Dundas à Toronto.

« Privatiser d’Hydro One : une autre mauvaise décision.

« Attendu que la privatisation d’Hydro One est un aller sans retour; et

« Attendu que nous allons perdre des centaines de millions de revenus fiables d’Hydro One pour nos écoles et nos hôpitaux; et

« Attendu que nous allons perdre le plus gros atout économique provincial et le contrôle de notre avenir dans le secteur de l’énergie; et

« Attendu que nous allons payer de plus en plus pour l’électricité, tout comme ce qui est arrivé ailleurs; »

Ils demandent à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario :

« D’arrêter la vente d’Hydro One et de faire en sorte que les familles de l’Ontario, comme propriétaires d’Hydro One, en bénéficient, maintenant et pour les générations à venir. »

J’appuie cette pétition. Je vais demander à Robert de l’amener à la table des greffiers.

WIND TURBINES

Mr. Jim McDonell: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas an industrial wind turbine development is to be constructed approximately 3.5 kilometres west of the village of Crysler by EDP Renewables; and

“Whereas the project will consist of 25-50 mega wind turbines and this has raised concerns by the citizens of Crysler and surrounding area related to health, safety and property values; and

“Whereas the Green Energy Act allows wind turbine developments to bypass meaningful public input and municipal approval;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Ministry of the Environment revise the Green Energy Act to allow full public input and municipal approvals on all industrial wind farm developments, and the Minister of the Environment conduct a thorough scientific study on the health and environmental impacts of industrial wind turbines.”

I agree with this and will be passing it off to page Julien.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Thank you. The time for petitions is over.

Orders of the day.

1550

ORDERS OF THE DAY

INFRASTRUCTURE FOR JOBS AND PROSPERITY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR L'INFRASTRUCTURE AU SERVICE DE L'EMPLOI ET DE LA PROSPÉRITÉ

Mr. Naqvi, on behalf of Mr. Duguid, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015 / Projet de loi 6, Loi édictant la Loi de 2015 sur l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la prospérité.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Mr. Naqvi.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, before I start, I will be sharing my time with the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure, the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

I'm very proud to stand in the Legislature on behalf of the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure and speak to Bill 6, entitled the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act. Building modern infrastructure is part of our government's plan to continue growing the economy and create jobs.

I know that in my community of Ottawa Centre, infrastructure investments, and specifically those in transit, are top of mind for many of my constituents. That's why I'm proud that our government has made significant investment and will continue to make even more.

There are three important infrastructure investments that I just want to quickly highlight, that are taking place in my community of Ottawa Centre and that are not only going to benefit my community but also the entire city of Ottawa, one being the building of phase 1 of the Confederation Line LRT in Ottawa. Our government is investing \$600 million in building this state-of-the-art LRT system that will start in my community of Ottawa Centre and then weave into the community of the member for Ottawa–Vanier, the Attorney General, and then into Ottawa–Orléans.

This project is the single largest public infrastructure project in the city of Ottawa since the building of the Rideau Canal. It just shows you the significance of this project, and how much it's going to redefine our city for years and years to come, because our government is investing in this very important project.

We are also, of course, helping to expand bike paths and improve pedestrian walkways across the city. That complements well with the building of the LRT.

The other very large infrastructure project that is taking place in my community, which impacts the entire city of Ottawa, is the building of an addition to the Ottawa heart institute. It's a state-of-the-art medical facility providing specialized heart care, not just in Ottawa but entire eastern Ontario. We're investing \$200 million in building a brand new expansion extension to the heart institute, with six brand new heart surgery operating rooms. It is, again, going to revolutionize the delivery of health care when it comes to heart health in our community.

I want to thank all the people who work at the Ottawa heart institute for their incredible work and diligence in helping us live healthy lives.

The other project that is extremely important to my community, and again benefits the entire city of Ottawa, is the building of Innovation Centre. Our government is investing over \$15 million in the building of Innovation Centre. This is going to be Ottawa's equivalent of

Communitech in Kitchener–Waterloo—a place of incubation; a place where we bring our entrepreneurs, our innovators, our students and all the other experts together, so that they can create the next big breakthrough.

We're working very closely with the city of Ottawa and Invest Ottawa, which is our economic development agency in the city of Ottawa, in developing Innovation Centre at Bayview Yards.

All these three investments are critical in helping to make my community of Ottawa Centre and our city of Ottawa—in fact, Speaker, I would argue, all of Ontario—the best place to live, work and raise a family.

I'm excited that we are now going to be investing over \$130 billion in public infrastructure over the next 10 years. That is just incredible, to see the kind of emphasis that our government is putting on building public infrastructure that will benefit every single community that we all have the privilege of representing.

These investments will build much-needed infrastructure in every corner of the province and will support over 110,000 jobs annually. Experts agree: Investing in our infrastructure is an investment in our economy and in our future.

An April 2013 report from the Conference Board of Canada found that each dollar invested in public infrastructure in Ontario raises the gross domestic product by \$1.14 in the near term. In addition, our own studies show that the returns on this dollar grow to \$3.10 in the long term while supporting jobs and facilitating private investment. That's a three-time increase as a result of investments in public infrastructure.

Bill 6, if passed, would require our government and future governments to regularly prepare long-term infrastructure plans. This will ensure that all governments recognize the importance of long-term planning for infrastructure.

The Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act is part of our plan to continue building a well-educated and highly skilled workforce. The proposed legislation would increase the opportunities for apprenticeships for a wide variety of trades.

As the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure has stated in the House before, our government was willing to accept amendments from the opposition and stakeholders to strengthen this important legislation. Bill 6 is now a stronger piece of legislation because of our collaborative work during the committee process. There are now provisions in this legislation around social housing, health and safety, accessibility and asset management, to name a few.

Speaker, I will conclude by stating that this bill represents our government's key priorities: to build Ontario up by investing in people's talents and skills, building new public infrastructure across the province and creating a dynamic business climate. I sincerely hope that all members of this House will support this important legislation during third reading.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Interjection.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I'm sharing my time. Where is our—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): It's got to rotate anyway.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Thank you.

The member from Wellington—Halton Hills.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I'm very pleased to have this opportunity this afternoon to speak in support of Bill 6 at third reading. Our caucus supported this bill at second reading as well.

I understand the bill was sent to a standing committee of the Legislature and was amended at committee, but I particularly want to acknowledge the constructive work that was done by my colleagues on the committee: Jeff Yurek, the member for Elgin—Middlesex—London, and Lisa Thompson, who of course is the member for Huron—Bruce. I want to thank them. Normally, within our caucus, the critic for the bill—in that case, me—would have been subbed in on the committee, but because the committee was time allocated and the committee met on the Monday of this week and the previous Monday for public hearings, I, of course, Mr. Speaker, was in the Chair. We're doing double duty many days here, trying to get it all done, and I want to express my thanks to my colleagues who are actually the members of that committee for our party, generally speaking. They carried on and did the work in committee.

There were public hearings. The minister who I follow, the government House leader, indicated that there were hearings. Yes, there were, and at the same time, I want to acknowledge the work that has been done by my colleague the member for Dufferin—Caledon. She has been assertively bringing forward the idea that we need to do more to recycle aggregates. There was actually an amendment to Bill 6 that was passed by the committee. It's now section 9.1: "Infrastructure planning and investment should endeavour to make use of acceptable recycled aggregates." Again, this is an amendment that was based largely on work that was done by the member for Dufferin—Caledon, and she deserves enormous credit. I think we need to recognize the opportunity that recycled aggregates represent and ensure that that opportunity is reflected in this legislation.

Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2014: This bill, if passed, enacts the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2014. The bill would enshrine a series of principles, requirements and authorities to promote improvement in infrastructure planning in the province of Ontario.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the provincial government, in the absence of Bill 6, brought forward recently a long-term infrastructure plan. That was, I think, appreciated by the people of Ontario whose projects were referenced in the plan.

1600

We pointed out at second reading that, in fact, the government was able to do that work before the election in the absence of Bill 6. So there's nothing stopping them from bringing forward a long-term infrastructure plan,

even if Bill 6 doesn't pass. But, certainly, the government wants to appear to be committed to ensuring that there is, on an ongoing basis going forward, long-term infrastructure planning, hence the need for Bill 6.

The government, in Bill 6, outlines a number of specific principles upon which infrastructure plans would be developed. That has been thoroughly canvassed, I think, in the second reading debate. But, certainly, as I said, as the official opposition, we support the idea of long-term infrastructure planning for the province of Ontario.

The government tells us they're committed to a \$130-billion long-term infrastructure plan over 10 years. We see, in this year's provincial budget, the government, in its capital plan, is committing to an expenditure on infrastructure of \$13.536 billion. That's maybe where you get the \$130-billion figure—times 10. The government is committed to around \$13.5 billion in infrastructure, when you look at the list; for example, about \$2.5 billion on provincial highways, \$2.7 billion on hospital infrastructure, \$1.9 billion on education infrastructure; justice, \$243 million. So, of course, the government has committed in the provincial budget to this kind of expenditure.

I think it's therefore reasonable for us, as members of the opposition, to point out some of the infrastructure needs that we have in our ridings. This is something that I've repeatedly raised in the Legislature on a number of occasions over the last several years now, and that is the need for the government to put the Highway 6 Morriston bypass project on the five-year plan for capital construction for highways.

Applause.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I want to thank the member for Essex for his support.

I've raised this I don't know how many times, Mr. Speaker, and I will continue to do so. You, as a member representing the Hamilton area, understand that this is an important project for the Hamilton area. I've raised it in the Legislature; I've raised it in committee.

We have put together something called the Morriston Bypass Coalition, which had a number of meetings in recent months with key officials within the government, including senior staff and several of the ministries.

The Morriston Bypass Coalition is a group of businesses, chambers of commerce and municipalities: Con Cast Pipe, Sleeman, Guelph Chamber of Commerce, Canada Bread, the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada, Nestlé Waters, Tim Hortons, Maple Leaf, the Freight Management Association of Canada, Fluke Transportation Group, the Grain Farmers of Ontario, the Hamilton Port Authority, the city of Hamilton, the Hamilton international airport, the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, Cargill, the county of Wellington, the Ontario Trucking Association, the Southern Ontario Gateway Council, the township of Puslinch, the city of Guelph and, of course, the county of Wellington.

They have done a good economic analysis of the need to proceed with this project, and we are currently waiting to hear back from the Minister of Transportation on a

recent request that we have made. We know that after the budget has passed—and, of course, the budget bill passed in the House this morning. The Ministry of Transportation now knows what its capital allocation is going to be for new highway construction in the year ahead. When they have that information, they're in a position to look at modifications to the five-year capital plan—the southern highways program, as the ministry calls it. Each year, they do projects that are on that plan, and that makes room for new projects to be added.

I would, again, respectfully request to the minister that he, as soon as possible, agree to meet with the township of Puslinch council representative—hopefully, the county of Wellington could be represented at that meeting, as well as the Morriston Bypass Coalition—so that he could hear for himself the important urgency of this project. I would hope that he would be in a position, then, to add it to the five-year plan of the ministry.

I want to, again, talk about the economic study that was done by the township of Puslinch—Mayor Dennis Lever and the township council and staff who took the lead on this to get this done. There was a report that was prepared by Dr. Clarence Woudsma of the University of Waterloo, which underlined the need to move forward with the Morriston bypass. The study included reference to the current traffic logjams through Morriston, which are costing commuters tens of millions of dollars every year, and the commercial traffic costs are in the millions of dollars annually. This report documented that the economic cost of the current logjam that exists through the hamlet of Morriston, in the township of Puslinch.

I also want to again remind the government that the Premier herself, in question period in July, implicitly acknowledged the importance of the Morriston bypass project. I had raised it in the Legislature the previous day, and in response to a question from our Leader of the Opposition, she said she felt that the issue I had raised the previous day was an important priority. As a former Minister of Transportation, we know—hopefully—that she has an understanding of the transportation needs of the province, perhaps better than some, and she would, hopefully, want her Minister of Transportation to follow through on this implicit statement that she made, that it should be made a priority. Again, I would ask the minister to do that.

Again, the Highway 6 Morriston bypass needs to be added to the Ministry of Transportation's five-year plan for new highway construction. Again, the Premier has acknowledged that the project is needed. The Morriston Bypass Coalition includes the township of Puslinch, the county of Wellington, the cities of Guelph and Hamilton, as well as chambers of commerce and prominent businesses such as Tim Hortons, Maple Leaf Foods, Nestlé Waters, Sleeman Brewery, Canada Bread, and Cargill.

Again, the township of Puslinch has done their homework, as was requested by a previous Minister of Transportation, who, of course, now serves as the Minister of Energy, who suggested that they put together this business coalition and study the economic impact. This has

been done, and it is now finally up to the government to respond.

Another important infrastructure priority in our riding is the need for a new courthouse in Halton region. The existing courthouse in Milton was built more than 50 years ago. It's no longer adequate to meet the needs of one of the province's fastest-growing areas.

I have had the opportunity to visit and tour the courthouse myself, and I encouraged the court users to also invite the other Halton-area MPPs, who subsequently had an opportunity to tour the Halton courthouse and see for themselves. We've tried to work together, across the aisle, setting aside partisanship, to advocate with the Attorney General on the need for a new courthouse. I think all of us—the member for Halton, the member for Burlington, and the member for Oakville, who serves as the Minister of Labour—are in agreement that this needs to be a priority.

I've raised this in the Legislature in question period. The Attorney General indicated again that—she said it was a priority. We're trying to find out what that means. Obviously, we would have expected some greater commitment in the provincial budget. It wasn't there, but we continue to identify that as a priority, as local MPPs, and we will continue to do so until the government finally does the right thing.

I would also want to acknowledge the good work that has been done by Halton regional council and Halton regional chair Gary Carr. They have worked hard to raise this issue with the government.

Courthouse users, including judges, lawyers and staff, and all of us, as I said—the Halton-area MPPs, the four of us—are behind the project. We would identify that as a priority in our area and urge the government to respond and announce that a new courthouse has been approved, and then proceed with the planning for it, and then we would look forward to seeing it built.

I'm pleased that the Minister of Education is in the House today. I would again call to her attention the need for a new Holy Cross Catholic school in Georgetown. In 2013, the Holy Cross Catholic school in Georgetown was the Halton Catholic District School Board's number one priority that they submitted to the government. They had a number of conversations with the minister, and I raised it in the House on a number of occasions. They put together a good business case. But unfortunately, they were not successful in getting approval for a replacement school.

I have had the opportunity to visit this particular school. I've toured it, I think, three times or maybe four times, working with the local school board trustee, Mark Rowe, who does a great job. The school was built in the late 1950s. It's currently in a deteriorating condition. A recent facility condition survey indicated that the building will require over \$5 million in repairs over the next eight years, to maintain it in an acceptable condition.

Then there is also insufficient room on the current site to expand the school, to support anticipated population growth in Georgetown. So even if they don't get

approval for a new school, they're going to have to spend \$5 million just to maintain it in an acceptable condition for the foreseeable future, for the next eight years.

Certainly, the school board wants to go ahead and build a new replacement school. I tried to do everything I can, as a member of the Legislature, to draw attention to this issue, working with the school board trustee and the local school board, and I will continue to do so.

1610

I'm also privileged to represent the town of Erin. The town of Erin's waste water management system is an important infrastructure project on the horizon in our riding. The town of Erin has been working for years on a servicing and settlement master plan—they call it the SSMP—and an environmental assessment appears to be the next step. The town of Erin is probably the largest southern Ontario community without a communal waste water management system. They still have septic in their backyards, and we need to move ahead to modernize the waste water treatment in that community.

The lack of a sewage system and communal waste water treatment system is impacting the town's ability to attract commercial and industrial investment and, currently, it's forcing ratepayers to pay increasingly higher taxes. But the town cannot afford to build this system without the support of the provincial government. According to published reports, the potential capital costs to provide sewage treatment/sanitary services for both Erin and Hillsburgh are estimated to be as much as \$58 million, with annual operating costs of \$900,000.

The town of Erin currently has a population of around 11,000 people, and approximately 4,500 people live in Hillsburgh and the former village of Erin. They need to move ahead with this project, but they cannot move ahead without substantial financial support from the province of Ontario. This is something that we've raised in the Legislature on a number of occasions now in the context of this discussion on Bill 6, and I will continue to raise it until we receive a satisfactory response.

Also in the town of Erin, we have a situation that has arisen in recent years: the Station Road bridge. The Station Road rehabilitation is an urgent project due to significant safety concerns. This is in the hamlet of Hillsburgh, in my riding. Station Road is located on top of an earthen berm which creates a dam. There's also a bridge within the dam to allow the Upper Credit River to pass underneath the road. There are significant structural concerns with the dam, and a hazard assessment recently done identified a high hazard potential should the dam collapse. There's also a fire station located adjacent to the bridge, and when the road was closed previously, an incident occurred which delayed emergency response, and nobody wants this to happen again. The Station Road bridge has been identified by the Credit Valley conservation authority as a safety concern.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has issued a temporary permit for the repair of the failed culvert, which requires a permanent solution to the entire dam situation. An article that appeared in August 2014 in the Welling-

ton Advertiser indicated that the town had received an 18-month extension from the Ministry of Natural Resources to come up with a permanent solution. So the clock is ticking. It's almost a year now since that edict came down from the ministry. Of course, the town council and the town staff want to do something, and they've come to my office to discuss it with me. I've written the government many times seeking financial support from the province for the town of Erin for this project, and I've been advised that the town cannot complete the project without "the financial assistance of other levels of government."

The town of Erin sought funding under the ministry's small, rural and northern infrastructure capital program, but they've been denied funding. They were told that their expression of interest did not pass the pre-screening process because other applicants had "highly critical projects" with "more challenging economic conditions."

This is totally unacceptable to me. It's totally unacceptable to the people of the town of Erin and the council. I think there has to be room for support from the provincial government for a project like this, especially when the provincial government is ordering the town to deal with it within an 18-month time frame and, of course, at the same time denying them the financial support they need to make it happen.

I would also like to talk about GO Transit service. In December 2008, I tabled a private member's resolution calling upon the government to extend GO train service to include stops in Acton, Kitchener and Waterloo by September 2011. Again, it was in 2008 that I brought that forward in this Legislature. While the new service was finally operational in January 2012—in fact, Mr. Speaker, I had the chance to ride that first train from Acton to Toronto and Union Station to come to work that day—there are only two trains in the morning and two in the evening. There are six in the morning from Georgetown and six in the afternoon, but only two trains morning and afternoon serving the community of Acton.

During the lead-up to the most recent provincial election campaign, the government promised full-day, two-way GO train service between Waterloo region and the GTA. However, their promise at that time lacked details and no specific time frame was committed to. When the House resumed sitting in July, after the provincial election, I raised this in the Legislature in the form of a private member's resolution; actually on the very first day it was possible to do so, the day of the throne speech. I asked the rhetorical question: How does the government define full-day, two-way service? Does it mean trains every hour through the day, every half-hour? And what is the time frame? I tabled that resolution, and it continues to be one of the top three private members' notices of motion on the order paper.

Subsequent to that, and in response to a series of questions from our opposition critic for transportation, the member for Kitchener—Conestoga, we were informed that it might take as many as 10 years before this commitment will be achieved, and that is apparently the

government's commitment now. During the election campaign, I don't think anybody expected that it would take 10 years. And while it's fair to say that they weren't giving us a specific time frame, to suggest it was going to take 10 years was not something they told us at that time. I commend my colleague the member from Kitchener-Conestoga for at least getting that much information, but we would encourage the government to proceed more expeditiously than that and get this done as quickly as possible.

I also want to mention, because it has come up at meetings with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture this week, another initiative that I brought forward in the Legislature with respect to high-speed Internet. There are still large parts of the province, particularly in rural Ontario, that do not have access to high-speed Internet; at least high-speed Internet that's affordable. The Internet service in rural Ontario is often slow, unreliable and expensive, and there are some residents of Ontario who still have no alternative but dial-up Internet.

I would say that reliable access to high-speed Internet is essential in today's economy. Whether you own a farm, run a business or use the Internet at home, we all depend on being connected. This is another issue I have raised, and will continue to raise in the House, trying to get the government to bring forward a provincial strategy to ensure that all residents of Ontario have access to affordable high-speed Internet.

There are a number of other projects.

In conclusion, I need to acknowledge the fact that the government, in its budget, has reinstated the Connecting Links Program. It was something our party called for, for a long time, and I want to express my appreciation for that. I wish I had more time, Mr. Speaker, because I've got a long list of projects that I'd like to talk about.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Thank you.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I know I'm out of time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): You are.

Mr. Ted Arnott: Thank you very much, and again, we support Bill 6 and will be supporting it at third reading.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: We're all anxious to get our words in here, as we are in the fleeting moments of the session, so I appreciate the member wanting to carry the clock for a while.

I am certainly always honoured to speak in this place, and speak within my critic's portfolio, which is infrastructure and small business. Bill 6 falls under that umbrella. Bill 6 is the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act. In my briefing notes, I have written down here, "It's all very nice, but where's the beef?" Essentially what we've come to think about this bill is that it is yet another bill to create a plan to be able to create more plans, similar to the bill we discussed this morning, the Great Lakes Protection Act.

Nevertheless, we can't fault the government for trying to prioritize or put some emphasis on the importance of

infrastructure-building in the province of Ontario. In fact, they have staked a lot of ground on it: roughly \$130 billion worth over the next 10 years. It always amazes me that a government can project 10 years into the future, in terms of what they're going to spend, assuming that they're going to be here in perpetuity. Why don't you make your plan 100 years in advance and tell us you're going to spend a trillion dollars? It's quite interesting.

However, they're going to spend \$130 billion or so, which roughly equates to about \$13 billion per year, on infrastructure in the province of Ontario. Undoubtedly, we know we that need it. There's a deficit in infrastructure. I would submit to the government: Why don't you start by stopping to waste so much money on public-private partnerships? You've wasted \$8.2 billion over the last nine years. Don't take my word for it, Speaker. Take the word of the auditor. There are lots of reports. If the members want to take the time to actually read the reports from the Auditor General, she clearly states that \$8.2 billion has been essentially vaporized under the watch of this government when it comes to funding and financing infrastructure projects. Our concern is that this will allow them to plan to vaporize more of that money.

1620

We would like to see them take a more prudent approach to planning, and maybe this is what, hopefully, gives them that opportunity, unlike what we heard, I guess, prior to the last election. We heard the government and several ministers tout their plan to develop and to bring about the high-speed rail network between Toronto and Montreal. Speaker, this was brought about with much fanfare. It was a promise to bring in new high-speed rail. It was unfunded. I remember it was just prior to the election. They were going to bring people from London to Toronto to Montreal. It would only cost half a billion dollars, be ready within 10 years and cost within \$10 a ride. What a stretch. What an incredible stretch.

And then we reminded them that we would like some high-speed rail between Windsor and London. They said, "Okay. We'll throw that in too as well," just as a teaser. It made quite a joke of their ability to plan and to really understand what the needs are of our community. That's why we are supportive of this. We hope it actually gives them a road map and the ability to project and to take into consideration municipal concerns, municipal needs, economic development concerns, the status of our infrastructure as it is—a whole host of things.

Speaker, I sat on the committee just this week in which we had some amendments to the bill. There were two recurring themes. One was the specific prescription about apprenticeships being allocated within the context of building public infrastructure projects. The government has proposed a quota system. As much as I understand and appreciate the need to bring apprentices online, a quota system on a hard measure potentially will not work. I would much rather take the government's direction on this and what they have implemented through the College of Trades, which is the ratios that are currently brought about through the College of Trades. That is

what has been done, as we are aware. They did turn around on the quota system. Now it will be factored in through the College of Trades. I truly appreciate that that change has been made.

The second recurring theme was one which many community members requested. Those who are involved in community development, community engagement and economic development requested that the government make consideration for the use of a community benefits plan, something that would be structured, targeted, something that had a model that those community partners could be involved in specifically, a direct pipeline, as it were, to infrastructure projects, to talk about how they can bring about new jobs for new immigrants, for those with disabilities, those who have not ever worked in that sector, and then address the apprenticeship issue. They were paid lip service too, Speaker—

Interjections.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thanks, Speaker. I just wanted to get your attention, because this is really important, what I'm talking about right here.

The community groups were talking about a community benefits plan. They were paid lip service by the government, actually. They were not given a community benefits plan. They were told that inherent in infrastructure planning and development are community benefits. You can see them. There are jobs. You can dig up sewers and there are jobs associated with that. People are spending money. But that doesn't actually deliver on what these folks were talking about. They were talking about a structured, measurable plan that had targets, benchmarks and thresholds.

I guess we're not going to see that through, so they've ultimately let down many community groups that made a good business plan for the involvement and implementation of community benefits plans within the bill.

Speaker, talking about apprenticeships, we know that we need to make a serious effort to bring new skilled trades and young workers into the skilled trades and to keep them here. Not only is there a demand side for skilled trades, but unfortunately, there has been an exodus of skilled trades to other jurisdictions. We've raised that alarm. Many have talked about the need to enhance the apprenticeship program and the supports that are given to apprentices.

What has the government's answer been to that need and to the demand that is in place? In the 2015 Ontario budget, the changes to the Apprenticeship Training Tax Credit, the ATTC—here's how they're going to respond to it—are going to decrease the general tax credit rate from 35% to 25%. That's not really going to help bring new apprentices online. It decreases the tax credit rate for small businesses, with salaries or wages under \$400,000 per year, from 45% to 30%, so they are no longer incentivized to bring on apprentices. They're cutting there again.

It decreases the annual maximum credit for each apprentice from \$10,000 to \$5,000. That directly affects those apprentices who are able to deduct the costs and fees to their apprenticeship program.

Fourth, it reduces the eligibility period from the first 48 months of an apprenticeship program to the first 36 months of an apprenticeship program.

Again, they talk a lot of game about enhancing and supporting apprentices in the province of Ontario. At the same time, the 2015 Ontario budget makes some drastic cuts to what we currently have under our apprenticeship regime. We don't understand the logic there.

Again, the bill essentially is a bill that creates a plan to be able to create a plan. I don't know if that makes sense to anybody. Certainly, it doesn't really make sense to us, especially given that there's nothing that prohibits the government, especially a majority government, from creating a plan today. They can create a 10-year plan, a 20-year plan, or they can create a 100-year plan. There is absolutely nothing that stops them from doing it. However, they felt the need to be able to have to structure themselves, so let's see them do that.

They've had different plans before. One of the plans is called the southern highways plan. Built into that southern highways plan are different infrastructure projects in the south that communities have identified that need to be done. They are not yet prioritized; some of them actually are, but some of them have been on the books for quite some time.

One of them, the Highway 3 bypass, in my riding of Essex, passed environmental assessment in 2006 and has been on the plan since 2006. It is a highway in Essex that is two-thirds done. It's completed two thirds of the way, from Windsor to Leamington, in its widening and expansion.

It's a highway that was long championed by my predecessor, Bruce Crozier. He spent 19 years in this place. I would submit and argue that of the 19 years—and he sat on the government for many of those years—he spent the majority of his time lobbying the government to actually start this project and then see it to its completion. Unfortunately, he passed several years ago. Actually, you know what? If memory serves me correctly, he passed two years ago today.

Interjection: Oh, my gosh.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Am I right? Yes. So we honour Bruce, and we think about him. He did a wonderful job. He was a wonderful representative.

Applause.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you, yes. Many of you sat in here with him. I had the good fortune and the honour, as a member, to introduce a motion several weeks ago that was entitled *Finish What You Started*, essentially—Finish the Bruce Crozier Highway. The highway is aptly named after Bruce. It called on the government to simply finish that program, and complete the highway. Don't do it for me. Do it for your former colleague Bruce Crozier.

It was voted against. I want to commend my friend the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, who stood with me—stood with us—and voted with that, I think because he saw it as really a practical thing to do. It's a project that has already been started. It meets all the criteria. It has a good business plan. It's sound in its

engineering. It has been on the books for quite some time. Let's earmark the funds for it and get it done. You started it. Finish what you started.

It goes a long way in rural Ontario to stick to your word and to do what you say you're going to do. That's potentially why we see so much consternation within rural Ontario when it comes to infrastructure and the ability for the province to prioritize anything that is outside of the boundary of the GTA.

We need bridges; we need roads; we need hospitals; and we need most of the underground services that you see in small communities. We need that desperately. However, when it comes to actually prioritizing our regions, and regions that require growth, we don't see that from this government.

I will point back to my riding, and Windsor. We have the Herb Gray Parkway, a \$1.8-billion infrastructure program that will link the 401 to the new Detroit River crossing, which will be called, as we now know, the Gordie Howe bridge, as Stephen Harper decided it would be named. Why not call it the Tim Hortons bridge or something? I don't know, but he decided to call it the Gordie Howe bridge.

1630

We have the Herb Gray Parkway, a massive infrastructure program. It's been transformative for our community. It's changed the landscape drastically. We know that it will improve, eventually, the flow of goods and services across our border, and we know that it will eventually support economic development.

However, despite the enormity of the price tag on that project, our region, in Windsor and Essex county—our unemployment remains unacceptably high. It's around 11.5%. The government claims that the \$13 billion per year will be the panacea of job creation and economic development, and undoubtedly it does; however, they've got to do a lot more strategic thinking in terms of what they put into place for economic development. We need an automotive strategy. We need an agriculture strategy. We need a local procurement strategy. These are all things that the government can no longer take a *laissez-faire* approach to when it comes to supporting our economies. They have to actually be on the job. Unfortunately, we've seen them outsource many of those vital components to other entities, and it's got them into a lot of trouble.

This is, again, about creating a plan. If it is to be that, I certainly support it. If it is a plan that is bulletproof and something that cannot be tampered with, and something that brings in broad consultation with various stakeholders—specifically municipalities—we are happy to support that initiative and to see it well-nuanced so that it really addresses our highest-priority needs.

Unfortunately, up to this date, we, again, have seen the government utilize infrastructure as the carrot, so to speak. Whether it be pre-election or post-election, at any given time they will dangle various infrastructure projects in front of communities, I believe, and I would say more so for political benefit than for the practicality of it.

One of which, I will remind members—I don't know who in this chamber at this moment actually canvassed and campaigned in Sudbury in the most recent by-election, but I can—yes, I see one hand over there. Do you remember your government proposing and promising that they were going to finish Maley Drive? What a melee you guys have created with that. You campaigned on it. You said, "We're going to finish it. If you elect Glenn Thibeault, we're going to get it done. He's going to get it done." Not two weeks later, three weeks later—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: No, they decided to change their minds.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: They changed their mind and said, "We can't do it." And there was poor Glenn Thibeault, who had to sit there with the Minister of Transportation and say, "Look, we made a mistake. Oops. We can't do it now. We're going to do it, believe us, we're going to do it—maybe after the next election that you elect me. But we can't do it this time."

Speaker, it's really a joke. It turns our infrastructure planning into a joke when we see a minister of the crown actually utilize an important infrastructure project, which that community has relied on and banked on and actually supported a member because they made that commitment, and turn it into a political football. It's ridiculous.

We want to see that stopped. We want to see the government take a serious approach to not only identifying and prioritizing infrastructure projects, but we want to see them take a hard look at how you fund it. You're going to sell off—evidently, you're selling off the majority of Hydro One to be able to fund 3% of your \$13.3-billion annual expenditures. So you're going to—

Mr. Victor Fedeli: It's not even used for that.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: It's not even that, I'm hearing. It's not even going to fund 3% of your overall expenditures. But you're going to blow a public asset that provides revenues and has provided revenues to the coffers of the provincial government for over 100 years. You're going to eliminate that forever, in perpetuity, for generations to come, and for what reasons?

I could imagine that today, after the budget passed, there were some corks of champagne bottles being popped down on Bay Street from the financiers and those who understand that they are going to make a massive amount of money on this transaction. In fact—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Wellington—Halton Hills and the education minister are a little loud.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you, Speaker.

There was a wonderful article in the Toronto Star just this week. Unfortunately, it had to be written by a white-collar criminal, a self-admitted con artist who apparently knows the ins and outs of the game on Bay Street. He identified this as something that potentially could be the biggest con that we've ever seen in the history of this province, something that he identified quite clearly as us being taken to the cleaners on this deal. Why is it that the Premier and the finance minister can't see that? Don't

take my word for it. Take the word of somebody who is actually doing time for similar types of deals.

Hon. Ted McMeekin: He's a senior adviser—

Mr. Taras Natyshak: He sounds like he could fit well within the advisory panel of the Clark report. To make this deal go down, it seems criminal; and I think the people of our communities feel as though it's criminal because they are the stakeholders. They are the majority owners within the package that the Premier is trying to sell us. They say they want to broaden ownership. Well, is there any broader ownership than each and every Ontarian as a stakeholder in Hydro One? No, there is not. There cannot be, and yet we are given no voice in this massive transfer of wealth from the public to the private sector. Who is going to pay the price? We absolutely know who is going to pay the price. It will be ratepayers in our communities who have to struggle with skyrocketing hydro rates.

Speaker, Bill 6, again, is a plan to create a plan. We will see what that plan is, going forward. The government has staked a lot of ground on it. Let's ensure that all stakeholders are duly consulted and a broad segment of the public gets to actually have their voice heard when it comes to prioritizing these infrastructure projects in our communities. Let's take the politics out of it. Unfortunately, a lot of the prescription in this bill is given to regulation, subject to ministerial approval. My confidence level that we're not going to see any more high-speed rail announcements or Maley Drive announcements in a political lens just prior to elections—my confidence is not that great that we won't see that or that this bill will prohibit that.

However, it will allow us to hold the government to account because they have made so much of the infrastructure file and staked so much political ground on it. We will see if they actually are true to their word or able to actually fulfil their promises to the people of Ontario. Unfortunately, right now, Speaker, we are not left with that much confidence. I thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: I welcomed the remarks from the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services and the members from Wellington–Halton Hills and Essex. I'm very pleased to rise in the House for the third reading of Bill 6, the proposed Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act. Indeed, one of the reasons why I chose to run for a seat in this House was to ensure that we had a government that would continue the momentum of investing in the much-needed infrastructure that this province requires.

At the heart of it, Bill 6 is about applying the expertise we've gained over the past decade as we move forward with the next generation of infrastructure investment. I see infrastructure investment as one of the most direct forms of economic development that a government can engage in. Building modern infrastructure is directly linked to building a competitive economy.

For instance, a 2013 Conference Board of Canada report found that each dollar invested in public infra-

structure in Ontario raises GDP by \$1.14 in the near term. Our own studies show that each dollar invested in infrastructure more than triples our return on investments in the long term. But unfortunately, for too long Ontario has relied on infrastructure that was outdated and deteriorating.

Since 2003, our government has invested nearly \$100 billion on infrastructure, focusing on what makes our communities stronger: assets like hospitals, schools and transportation infrastructure. In the past decade we've built 23 new hospitals, and 650 new schools have opened or are under construction. That is a tremendous record of achievement.

We're currently constructing 11 major hospital projects across the province, and we've expanded or rehabilitated over 9,100 kilometres of highways. That's more than the distance from Toronto to Vancouver and back. Together we've built or repaired over 950 bridges across this province. We've accomplished a lot, but we recognize that there is still much more that needs to be done. That's why our government is investing an unprecedented \$130 billion in infrastructure in the next decade. This is the largest infrastructure investment our province has ever seen.

1640

Unlike the opposition, who say they support infrastructure but have no concrete plan to fund it and have consistently voted against budget measures that would fund it, the Premier announced our plan to unlock the value of certain public assets to help support investments in transit, transportation and other priority infrastructure projects. Together with other asset optimization strategies, this will provide us with \$5.7 billion; that's about \$2.6 billion more from asset optimization than we had previously assumed. This increase of \$2.6 billion brings our unprecedented investments in Moving Ontario Forward from \$29 billion to \$31.5 billion over the next 10 years. That's going to help communities like Etobicoke–Lakeshore, Hamilton, Mississauga, Brampton, Kitchener–Waterloo, Ottawa and many others.

Just as asset optimization is part of our long-term infrastructure plan, moving forward with Bill 6 is part of the same path forward to ensure Ontario has the infrastructure it needs to promote a modern economy and build a dynamic business climate. At this legislation's core, Bill 6 is about enshrining solid principles for long-term infrastructure planning in Ontario to guide our path forward. I note that the member for Essex spoke about the need for this type of approach.

Under the proposed legislation, the government must prepare a long-term infrastructure plan that covers at least 10 years. Mr. Speaker, the rigour of this process will ensure that the needs of our changing province are reflected in our infrastructure planning.

I'm very proud to say that during the committee process, we've strengthened the legislation by adopting amendments from both stakeholders and the official opposition, though I do wish to note for the record that the third party, the NDP, did not bring forward any amendments.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you for reminding me.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: You're very welcome.

Mr. Speaker, we broadened the definition of infrastructure in this legislation to include social housing. I think that's a very important step forward, and I can only hope that when the federal government decides to invest significantly in infrastructure, they will invest in social housing as well. This will accurately reflect in legislation the importance that we place on the building of social housing as infrastructure. Since 2003, our government has committed over \$4 billion to affordable housing, which is the largest investment of its kind in the province's history. Including social housing in the definition will encourage future governments—and as I said, I dare say the federal government—to take this type of infrastructure investment seriously.

We also amended the legislation to ensure that consideration to accessibility is incorporated when we build infrastructure. Mr. Speaker, today is the 10th anniversary of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. I cannot think of a better day to remind MPPs and Ontarians collectively that we must constantly think about how we can improve accessibility in the province. This amendment to Bill 6 is one of the many changes we need to make in the coming decade.

One concept that was raised numerous times during public hearings was that of community benefits. I'm very encouraged that all parties agreed to accept an amendment that infrastructure planning and investment should promote social and economic benefits for local communities. As MPPs, we're all focused on improving our constituencies, and this amendment will encourage local benefits from local infrastructure projects. Unlike the assertion that the member from Essex made, in fact, this government is entering into community benefit agreements on various projects throughout the province. We will be using that as a tool in future infrastructure planning to ensure that communities, that young people, that people seeking employment get the full benefit of the infrastructure projects being built in their communities.

In consultation with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, we also accepted an amendment that will allow the government to create regulations requiring municipalities or any other broader public sector entity to develop asset management plans. This builds on the work that we've been doing with municipalities to prioritize infrastructure through asset management planning. Now we will have the ability to standardize asset management planning, which is necessary to realize the full value of this work.

As we move forward on this, we'll continue to consult significantly with municipalities to ensure these regulations are crafted to improve municipalities' ability to deliver on their infrastructure needs. This is not only good planning, it's good business practice and it's nothing less than what the taxpayers of this province would expect from all levels of government.

We also adopted an amendment that recognizes the crucial role that the professional engineers in Ontario

play in implementing the government's infrastructure investments. This amendment creates equal authorities for both professional engineers and architects. And we improved the legislation to promote apprentices. We did this through the committee process. This legislation encourages—I'm tripping over my remarks here, Mr. Speaker. What I meant to say—I wanted to continue on the issue of design professionals.

This legislation encourages the broader use of architects and other design professionals to be used in large-scale infrastructure projects so we might derive further value from the money that we're spending on infrastructure, to improve urban design, landscape design, the resiliency and the durability of these infrastructure projects that we are building.

On the issue of apprentices, we are moving to a plan-based approach. I believe we've now struck the right balance of promoting apprentice training while at the same time taking into consideration the industry's concerns.

Today we have a situation where many young people face great challenges in finding stable, well-paying jobs, and meanwhile there are shortages in many of the skilled technical trades. The skills training and apprenticeship provision in Bill 6 is a smart and strategic way to help close this gap.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker—and, maybe the official opposition will argue, most importantly—we adopted a PC amendment that will consider the use of recycled aggregates for infrastructure projects. Our government understands the economic and environmental benefits for considering recycled aggregates for infrastructure projects, and this amendment will ensure that recycled aggregates are considered as part of infrastructure planning and investment. I do want to thank members of the PC caucus for bringing this forward as a very good submission to the process.

Our government views Bill 6 as a landmark piece of legislation in helping to shape Ontario's future. I encourage all members of the House to support this legislation.

As I said at the outset, one of the key reasons why I decided to run as a member of provincial Parliament is that I saw the damage that was done to my community, to my city, to my region through the lack of infrastructure investment: a transit system that was outdated and underserving the communities; roads, highways, bridges that were falling apart or were not keeping up with demand; schools that were deteriorating; and a lack of health infrastructure for the future. So I ran to support a government that is investing in this. I ran because this is a government that is supporting the people and businesses of Ontario by providing the key infrastructure that's going to ensure that this province is a wonderful place to invest in and to continue to live, work and play in.

1650

Interjections.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: Mr. Speaker, I know that while these truths are self-evident, they are sometimes

painful to some members of the House. But it is no laughing matter to acknowledge that this province, over a number of decades, had a significant infrastructure deficit. Investing in infrastructure now and doing it in an informed, planned and managed way is going to ensure that Ontarians will be able to know that the money that is spent on this is going to deliver the maximum value.

I also believe, and I hope and trust, that with this bill, we'll be able to depoliticize some of the infrastructure decisions that are made in this province so that, in the future, whoever sits on this side of the House will continue to deliver infrastructure for the people of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate? Last call for further debate.

Pursuant to the order of the House dated Tuesday, May 12, 2015, I'm now required to put the question.

Mr. Naqvi has moved third reading of Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2014.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

I believe the ayes have it.

This will be a five-minute bell. Call in the members.

Here we go—a vote deferral.

Pursuant to standing order 28, they request that the vote on third reading of Bill 6 be deferred until deferred votes on Thursday, June 4, 2015.

Third reading vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Orders of the day.

SMART GROWTH FOR OUR COMMUNITIES ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 POUR UNE CROISSANCE INTELLIGENTE DE NOS COLLECTIVITÉS

Resuming the debate adjourned on June 2, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 73, An Act to amend the Development Charges Act, 1997 and the Planning Act / Projet de loi 73, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur les redevances d'aménagement et la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): When we last talked about this bill, Mr. Hatfield from Windsor-Tecumseh had the floor.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Speaker, good afternoon. Again, may I say I'm humbled to be able to stand in this House, as one of 107 voices in this Legislature, to have the privilege to speak to this bill.

I spent 35 or 40 minutes speaking to the bill yesterday morning, and by way of a brief summary, just to bring you up to date, a lot of what I had to say then was about inclusionary zoning, and that's a major way that I thought this Bill 73 could be improved. Municipalities that wish to create more affordable housing could use inclusionary zoning as a tool when developers come into

the planning department to apply for new housing developments. You can establish your goals—for the sake of argument, say, 10%. If you want to build a 100-unit development, you might have to set aside 10 units and make them available to qualified people who need affordable housing, from an established waiting list.

We can debate whether 10% is too high or too low, but I believe the principle is sound on inclusionary zoning and it's something we should all take a look at. As we all know, there are just too many people in Ontario looking for safe and affordable housing. Inclusionary zoning could solve some of that problem—not all of it, Speaker. There are so many other things out there. But this bill would really be something to brag about, really something to hold up to the rest of the country, if, finally, the government did more than just listen to the argument on inclusionary zoning and actually added something in here to address the problem of the lack of housing.

There's a crisis in affordable housing, and it's something we should be addressing. It's only going to get worse. The municipal housing stock across the province is really starting to crumble. No matter where you go, municipalities that provide subsidized housing and rent-geared-to-income housing—there hasn't been a lot of money spent on maintaining these properties in recent years, and private landlords certainly aren't rushing forward to build new housing stock for those who need it the most. They say that they would if they had more government partners with them on various schemes. We could create some more housing stock for people who need affordable housing and rent-geared-to-income housing, but private developers need incentives. They can't do it on their own. I think that if you worked it the right way, inclusionary zoning is one of the incentives that could be used to address this problem.

I also spent a good deal of my time yesterday outlining the need for real reform at the Ontario Municipal Board. I know they'll be looking at it elsewhere, but I still think we could have seen more by way of OMB reform within this bill, because I believe you can't fix planning problems in Ontario until you harness the extraordinary powers of the Ontario Municipal Board.

There are other aspects of Bill 73, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, that we should be talking about this afternoon. As I said yesterday, there are a number of parts of this bill that are worth saying some nice things about, and I'll do that at some point this afternoon.

It's easy to be critical. I guess that's why they call us critics. If you're the critic of a portfolio held by a minister, you're expected, at some point, to stand up and criticize what's on the table. On the other hand, it's easy to say good things. I believe that if there are good things in a proposed bill, you should highlight those as well, and I will be doing that. It's easy to state that you agree with something, just as it is easy to say, "I disagree."

Speaker, I mentioned to you that before becoming a New Democrat MPP, I was a member of city council in Windsor. One of the first committees I signed up for, as a

councillor, was the planning advisory committee. I was very proud to serve for seven years on the PAC for the city of Windsor. I wanted to do that, because I always thought it was one of the most important committees that any municipality can have.

Planning is really sneaking a peek into the future of your community. It's a snapshot of what is to come, or it offers an idea of what could be possible. Don't get me wrong: I know that we've all believed in projects that never developed and never got off the planning pages. They looked good on paper.

I remember that years ago—Bill Davis was Premier; I think his friend was Gerhard Moog. They brought forth a proposal. You'll appreciate this, member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore: It looked almost identical to Toronto city hall; you know, the dome and the towers. That was to be the new Holiday Inn on Windsor's waterfront. We accepted, of course; the city of Windsor at the time did. But instead of that, we ended up with the Plywood Palace, a basic box. It stood there for many years until it burnt down. But what was accepted by the municipality later led the municipality to put in a lot of changes to make sure that in the future we would get what we were promised. At the time, we were promised this great vision, and we ended up with the Plywood Palace, as I say.

I'm still waiting for some pretty imaginary proposals that were presented to city council. Even back when I was a reporter covering city hall and covering planning council advisory committee meetings, you would see these plans on paper and say, "Wow. Wouldn't that be good?" But just because they were accepted didn't mean they were going to be developed and built. Life goes in the way: A funder drops out, for some reason; priorities change. But, at least at the planning stage, there are sets of rules and guidelines, standards, statements that establish the parameters of what sort of proposal might fit into or onto a certain parcel of land.

1700

The way I see planners, I see them as the visionaries. They have the imagination to see what most of us can't. For them, it's more like a game of chess as opposed to us playing checkers.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: I think they make it up.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: They make it up? You're an engineer; don't tell me that.

Planners know what amenities it will take to service a plot of land, how the traffic will flow, where the sidewalks should go, how much parkland will be needed, for example, what land should be set aside for school purposes, where the bus stop should go, will there be room for commercial and industrial zones and how close they should be to residential areas. Once those plans are set in place, they should be set in stone. This bill would establish criteria to delay challenges to official plans and policy statements, and I'll speak to that a little bit later on as well.

I will mention at this point that in Windsor we always made sure that non-elected representatives sat on the

planning advisory committee. For many years, that was the way we did our business, and that's part of this bill, that a non-elected member of the public and administration would sit on a municipal planning advisory committee. In fact, in Windsor our committee was chaired for many years by a non-elected person. Now, this changed somewhat when we adopted a new governance system and created more standing committees of council, but for me the principle was sound then and it's sound today, that non-elected reps should be included on planning committees. This bill will see that this happens in all communities on a go-forward basis—of course, if it's adopted and accepted.

If we turn our attention to the section requiring a parks plan and the cash-in-lieu provisions of parkland dedication, no one seriously questions—I would hope no one seriously questions—the need for parkland in urban settings. We need our green space. We need our trees. We need our playgrounds. We need our dog parks. For most people, it's just a basic quality-of-life thing. Official plans speak to this issue. And don't forget, Speaker, developers are used to paying the price. No matter where they build, if they don't have the land to develop parkland as part of their proposal, they're used to and are required to put up cash in lieu of dedicating certain land for parkland; nothing new there. The money is supposed to go into a reserve account, and it's supposed to be used to create parkland, hopefully nearby. That's how it's supposed to work. It doesn't always, apparently, work out that way.

Late last year, there was a bit of an exposé in Toronto on the Toronto situation. Those who write for a quarterly magazine and an online blog called Spacing blew the whistle on Toronto's cash-in-lieu reserve fund. Sure, the money is collected from the developers, but for the most part, it just sits there earning interest. Now here's an excerpt from that Spacing article I read. The quote is:

"The city likes to boast about its open spaces, citing how its 1,600 parks and 600 km of trails encompasses 8,000 ha, or 13% of Toronto's area. As every park entrance sign duly notes, Toronto is 'a city within a park.'

"Yet it's become apparent that there simply aren't enough parks within the city, or at least certain parts of the city. In areas of high growth, and the dense older neighbourhoods that abut them, the city of Toronto has largely failed to create new networks of parks and substantial public open spaces sufficient to accommodate the needs of tens of thousands of new apartment dwellers."

In this Spacing article, written by John Lorinc and Alex Steep, it was revealed that Toronto's parkland acquisitions and development reserve fund stood at more than \$248 million. Don't get me wrong, Speaker; the city is spending some of that money, but because the land is so expensive in the areas where green space is needed the most, the parks get developed in other areas where the land is less expensive.

This Spacing article also suggested that some people in the planning areas, in planning departments at city

hall, warned against creating new parks because they couldn't afford to maintain what they already had. I think that's an issue that—I know I ran into that when I served as chair of the Essex Region Conservation Authority. We had a parkland land acquisition reserve fund, and yet some members didn't want to spend it because we were having trouble maintaining what we had. There wasn't always enough money to fix the boardwalks in certain parks or along the waterfronts or in our green water spaces. Some members, rightfully so, questioned why we would be buying more waterfront property to maintain if we couldn't afford to maintain the conservation areas that we already had.

So in the defence of those who say, "Why dedicate more parkland when you can't look after what you already have?"—I'm sure they would point out that, for example, an acre of land in downtown Toronto goes for, what, somewhere between \$30 million and \$60 million? And, you know, to develop that—or just to find it, first of all; there's not a lot of land out there for parkland these days.

If the money isn't being used, the flip side of that coin is that instead of the cash in lieu, then perhaps municipalities should just say to the developer, "We're going to force you to acquire more land on your own and create this parkland on your own dime," instead of paying the city so many cents on the dollar for not providing it.

Let me say some nice things about Bill 73 for a moment. Now, I'll say off the top, I like the bill, I'll be supporting it, but I do think it needs improvement. For example, it removes the arbitrary 10% discount that must be applied to transit-related growth, the growth costs when calculating development fees. It allows you to prescribe services where costs could be estimated based on future plans and not past policy. It pulls back the drapes, as we just talked about, on how the money collected in lieu of parkland is saved and spent; it makes that more transparent.

Like I say, I'm not convinced with the aspect I'm not happy with at all—in one part of the bill, it reduces the parkland dedication payments from a rate of one hectare for every 300 residents to one for every 500. That weakens the intent, as far as I'm concerned.

I referenced yesterday, for those that were here, the OMB's weird ruling in Richmond Hill. This falls into that category, as far as I'm concerned. To refresh your memory, Speaker, the OMB overruled Richmond Hill's elected council. They wanted developers to provide or pay cash in lieu of parkland when new developments were proposed. We all know we need the green space, as I've mentioned, and more of it, but the OMB ruled that there should be a cap on what a developer has to provide.

I used the example of a cap working something like this. If you can, in your mind, just get a picture of a bit of green space, a small grassy park. If you can now picture 75 families having a picnic on this small property, and now, in your mind, get that picture, not of 75 families, but of 750 families on that same—

Interjection.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Yes, a lot of them would still have moustaches, the member from Nipissing is suggesting. Maybe in North Bay they don't have as many. I don't know. But if you have 750 families squeezing out the 75, you're going to be elbow to elbow; you're going to be standing on each other's heads. To me—and I think I'm a pretty reasonable kind of guy—the OMB vision of a cap on green space that should be provided, as opposed to what the town's planners and councillors had in mind, I just don't think makes a lot of sense.

1710

I said I'm going to say some good things about the bill, and I will.

Interjection.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Well, I've been saying it in between the lines, as well. I don't want to wake too many of you up. I've got to keep this going for another seven and a half minutes.

The bill does delay appeals to official plans and zoning bylaws, and it does away with global appeals of new official plans. Developers can appeal a specific section but not the entire plan. Municipalities will have more powers to protect what are called "employment areas." It makes planning decisions more transparent by making approval authorities explain how written or oral submissions affected their final decision. It makes single- and upper-tier municipalities establish a planning advisory committee, which we talked about. And as I said, it insists that at least one member of those committees not be an elected or paid municipal official.

Currently, provincial policy statements are updated every five years; this bill will change that to 10. Just like new official plans, they'll be good for 10 years and updated every five years thereafter.

Minister, like I said, there are some good points, and I can support the bill, but I think a lot of us on this side of the House would really like to see it improved in other areas, especially around the themes of real OMB reform and inclusionary zoning. I can't believe that your Toronto-area members haven't lobbied you personally for better language around inclusionary zoning. They'll be the ones feeling the wrath of the voters because of the crisis that we know currently exists in Toronto when it comes to affordable housing.

Minister, allow me to thank you once again for supporting the private member's bill brought by the member for Essex, Mr. Natyshak, regarding the improvements to the Bruce Crozier highway. In my opinion, you, sir, have earned a ton of goodwill with your vote, as far as I'm concerned.

I know you've got a whole bunch on your plate these days. You have your mandate letter. You're reviewing plans on the greenbelt, the Oak Ridges moraine and the Niagara escarpment, and I sincerely hope that we won't see much in the way of any degradation, any deterioration of land set aside and protected from future development, when those plans go through their review process. I think the farmland has to be protected. The green space has to be protected. I just hope, Minister, that the OMB

doesn't get involved and overrule all the good intentions of what most of us want to protect when it comes to those plans.

I know the city of Toronto has some concerns about the bill. I won't go into all of them. For example, we talk about the planning process and having a non-elected member on the planning advisory committee. As I understand it, in Toronto they have a much more mature, if you will, planning process, and they are, in their opinion, much more advanced than what is being proposed in the bill. I think they are asking for a clause allowing for exceptions to municipalities which can prove to the minister that his intent in some of these proposals has already been met, are being met in certain circumstances.

And in some of Ontario's municipalities, they're doing much more than what is laid out in here, and that shouldn't be held against them.

Yesterday, the member from Oxford, the critic for the official opposition, spoke about my friend Dave Canfield, the mayor of Kenora. Ernie reminded us that the mayor's office in Kenora is actually closer to the city of Calgary than it is to the city of Toronto, so when those that call these types of bills a cookie-cutter bill that we all have to come out of in the same kind of shape—there are other parts of the province. Toronto has Toronto's issues, but other parts of the province have different issues, different restrictions, different ways of doing business that seem to be working, but if you come out with exceptions to some rule, that will cause problems for some.

I know that I talked to my friends at AMO and we talked about the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund—since we're talking about strengthening municipalities. They were hoping that there wouldn't be as much of a download, as much of a cutback in that fund, and I know the original cut has been somewhat diminished; it's not as bad as it could have been, and I know that they're very appreciative of that. But, again, municipalities are struggling. Even in my community of Windsor, when a factory closes down or a plant shuts down and they have this empty space—and it happens in the northern communities as well in logging mills and so on, when most of the plant is not being used or all of the plant is shut down. MPAC says, "Okay, now the value of the assessment on that property, that could be going to pay for the region's tax base"—all of a sudden it's negligence. When you lose, in a small community, \$1 million or \$2 million in an assessment, you're really struggling to pay the bills and really struggling to keep on providing the services that we've all come to expect.

Municipalities are struggling, Minister—I know you're well aware of that—and we all know money is tight, not only in the province but with our municipal partners as well. Yesterday I mentioned the crumbling housing stock where Mayor John Tory is looking for \$1.5 billion from federal and provincial partners. We know that hundreds of thousands of people are on the waiting lists for subsidized housing, let alone the people who are in there now.

I know, Minister, you and I have talked about—I think it was in Medicine Hat, Alberta, they're getting rid of the

homelessness problem. Things happen in the rest of the country that we can look at here which would help with affordable housing as well. It takes money. I know sometimes it's tough to get cabinet colleagues on the same page, no matter the portfolio.

Just let me mention the private member's bill, Bill 39, that the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore has on the table. A lot of that is very good, around inclusionary zoning, and I don't know why that wasn't included in this bill because it is a good bill. It should be supported, and if it was woven into this, this would be a great bill.

I think I have pretty well wrapped up my time and I do have some more stuff I would like to put on the table, but I just want to thank you for your time this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I am not going to comment much on my good friend from Windsor–Tecumseh because I think he gets what this bill is trying to do and I think, as he has indicated, he agrees with a lot of the stuff that we are doing. As we pass this and move it down the road to committee, there will be some amendments, probably, and hopefully we could take some kind of a balanced approach.

What I want to do, Speaker, though, is clear the air on something that the member from Oxford, during his debate yesterday, totally misrepresented that is in the bill. I know the member from Windsor–Tecumseh touched a little bit on it, and that's the part where we're taking away some responsibilities from the municipalities. Quite the contrary: We are giving the municipalities more responsibility, more control. One is by certainly increasing the review of our official plan from five to 10 years, but the fact of amending that official plan—the member from Oxford yesterday said that municipalities would not be able to touch it for two years, and everybody else won't be able to touch it. Frankly, municipalities and their elected councils are the only ones that will be able to make any amendments or suggest any amendments. So I think it's important to make sure that while we might not agree on certain things let's at least talk about the facts. The facts are black and white: If this bill is passed, then the municipalities have that opportunity.

1720

There has been a lot of consultation since early last fall to earlier on this year, and municipalities had a huge input. AMO had a huge input. I'm sure, at the end of the day, we'll come up with something that will fit what it's supposed to do. I look forward to the passage of Bill 73.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: The member from Windsor–Tecumseh spoke about the cookie-cutter bill, and the member from Oxford did indeed talk about communities in northern Ontario, many of which are closer to Winnipeg and Calgary than they are to Toronto. Here's what happens when you have people in Toronto making bills that are allegedly a one-size-fits-all: You've got very distinct problems in Toronto and the greater Toronto

area, and you've got very distinct problems both in northeastern Ontario and in northwestern Ontario.

I remember sitting in the mayor's chair in North Bay when Bill 26 crossed. It was an act that took away the ability to build on a wetland. Now, certainly in Toronto and the GTA, the wetlands are few and far between, and we can understand the value of that. We understand in the north, especially, how water is filtered through our wetlands. But if you come to northern Ontario, if you take even one flight over northern Ontario, you will see that there is only rock or wetland. That's all that's there, and you build your cities around them.

You used to be able to—a municipality was able to build on a wetland if it created an equal-sized wetland elsewhere. While I was mayor, we accumulated over 100 acres of wetland and built this most beautiful conservation area with boardwalks so people could walk through, and then we built an industrial park in a wetland. As businesses came, they built their business. Well, Bill 26 said, "Right across Ontario now, no more building on a wetland, even if you replace it." We have a \$40-million industrial park, fully serviced, that cannot be built on. That's why we ask for such particular attention to be paid to the north.

Mr. John Yakabuski: That was the Liberals—the Liberals.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: That was the Liberals.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Thank you. I see the member from Renfrew is wandering again.

Ms. Catherine Fife: He's wandering in the right direction, though.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Yes.

The member from Kitchener—Waterloo.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I just want to commend the member from Windsor—Tecumseh. He always brings his experience to the debate. But Bill 73, Smart Growth for our Communities Act, is a missed opportunity once again to truly reform the Ontario Municipal Board. What we've seen is that there are still massive parts that are missing. After a year and a half of consultation, you've come back to the Legislature with another flawed piece of legislation. As I said, it's a missed opportunity.

The bill ignores solutions to affordable housing, such as inclusionary zoning. We know the value of inclusionary zoning. We have a huge housing crisis in the province of Ontario. Build it into the act.

This piece of legislation doesn't even support Bill 39 from the member from Etobicoke—Lakeshore—sometimes we feel we're more supportive of your private member's bill than your own government.

In Kitchener—Waterloo and Waterloo region, we have been feeling the pain of the Ontario Municipal Board now for five years. You will remember, of course, that we're a good place to grow; we've been highlighted for intensification. The 10 years of consultation—and we came out with this great plan. The developers took us to the Ontario Municipal Board. They found against us. They increased it—their finding—by 1,000 hectares. For five years, we just found out, it cost \$1.7 million that the

region had to spend to fight that decision. Five years: Think of the economic drag in the region, from that perspective. They finally settled. It was out of court. They settled at 455 hectares, so they split the difference, essentially.

This is not democracy. An unelected, undemocratic board can override a municipality. It is not in the best interests of the people of the region. It's not in the best interests of the people of the province. Bill 73 misses the mark entirely on addressing this serious issue.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Hon. Ted McMeekin: I want to also commend the member from Windsor—Tecumseh. I think the fact he has an extensive municipal background has helped him grasp the direction of this bill.

I share his passionate concern for social housing. We're going through a long-term housing policy as well as the expert panel. The member knows that; we've chatted about that.

I know the member from Etobicoke—Lakeshore was quite supportive of Bill 73. He's spoken to that. Green space shouldn't just be around cities; it should be through cities. Part of our provision, the member opposite will know, is to hold municipalities to account around how they collect—and they'll have to report as to what parkland and green space they have invested in. I think that's really good.

You mentioned the coordinated review. I'm quite excited to have attracted the Honourable David Crombie—an institution and an inspiration. I met with him as recently as this morning to talk about some of the work that he's doing, and he's very, very excited. I also met with a group called Neptis. You may know them as well. They had a good report comparing Vancouver's planning to Toronto's planning.

I want to just say that, with respect to inclusionary zoning, we've made it very clear to the member from Parkdale that if that's to come about, it would come about as a result of the housing review that we're doing. So we're looking seriously at that.

As for the OMB, there would be a separate review. CMHC used to have a form of inclusive zoning. They called it the limited dividend building. We're also looking at that concept as well. That was back when we had a federal partner. It would be nice to have that as well.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Windsor—Tecumseh has two minutes.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you to the members for Northumberland—Quinte West, Nipissing, Kitchener—Waterloo and, of course, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

When we talk about green space, we talk about partners. I harken back to the fight we had, as members of city council in Windsor, with the provincial Liberal government over the Herb Gray Parkway. What was presented to us initially was, I think, six lanes in each direction, flat highway, and it was just going to look like what we see in Toronto, the 401 area. We dug in our heels: no. We

said, "We're not going to accept it. This is the gateway to Canada, if you're coming in from Michigan, or it's the last vision you'll have when you leave here on your way across the border. We want something better."

We hired world experts in traffic flow, in tunnelling and parkland, and we ended up with something we can all be proud of in this province—it was more expensive, yes—the Herb Gray Parkway. It did have its problems; I won't get into "girdergate" or anything like that. But at the end of the day—and we're still waiting for the bridge to be built across the border—we are going to have a magnificent parkland over top of this highway, and the tunnelling and all the connecting trails and links. It's going to be something we can all be proud of in Ontario, but it took a fight to convince the government that, indeed, it was worth it.

At the end of the day, you might spend a bit more money upfront, but it is something that people will talk about and people will remember. Of course, it might also set some sort of a precedent and we may have to build more of these in other parts of the province. I say, "Bring it on," because it's well worth it.

Actually, Minister, I think that highway could be open in a matter of weeks, if not days, from what I'm hearing. We're that close to it. A little overdue—four or five months—but it will be open pretty soon.

Thank you for your time this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Ms. Soo Wong: I'll be sharing my time with the members from Beaches–East York, Mississauga–Streetsville and Etobicoke Centre.

I'm very pleased to rise this afternoon in support of Bill 73. As I heard this afternoon the eloquent words from the member opposite about the proposed legislation, I am very pleased, as a Toronto urban member of this House—why we need to have this proposed legislation.

As we heard this afternoon, the proposed legislation's changes aim to give municipalities more opportunity to fund the growth-related infrastructure like transit and waste diversion. It will also address the issue of development charges like section 37, particularly density bonuses and parkland dedication systems. On a number of occasions in this chamber, we've heard from our colleague the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, who spoke passionately about the lack of parkland in his riding and how important it is for the children and the people in his riding.

1730

The proposed Bill 73 has a number of pieces that I think all of us in this chamber would agree on. First of all, it has been, I believe, since the mid-1990s that this Legislature last reviewed the development charge. It's almost over 20 years since we did that review, and it's overdue that we do this kind of review.

But the other big part of this proposed legislation is dealing with the issue of growth. Across the city of Toronto and across the province, we see growth everywhere when it comes to infrastructure. The proposed legislation,

if passed, will remove the mandatory 10% discount required when levying a charge for transit services; I believe everybody in this House would agree with me that it is a good thing. It will create an authority to identify services for which an alternative service level calculation would replace the historic 10-year average service level, and it will create an authority to identify ineligible services exclusively through regulation.

The other piece we constantly hear concerns about in this chamber is about enhancing transparency and accountability. If passed, this legislation would require municipalities to reflect capital projects funded through development charges in a more detailed report. The other piece is, it will require development charges to link to municipal asset management planning.

I hear all the time with regard to transparency, "What did they do with the development charges? Where did the money go?" More importantly, this particular legislation will restrict payment outside of the development charges regime for the capital costs associated with servicing new development and require municipal treasurers to certify that no payments have been received that are in contravention of this restriction.

Furthermore, it will create an authority for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to investigate a municipality in relation to compliance with the act. Finally, this authority will allow the minister to investigate but also require the municipality to cover the costs of this compliance investigation. I think those extra teeth, as we often say, will force the municipality to be accountable and to be transparent, and they know the consequences if they're not in compliance. At the end of the day, I'm sure no municipality wants to pay for that investigation.

At the end of the day, I believe that we've heard very clearly that every member of the House will support little bits and pieces of this proposed legislation, Bill 73. I am sure that every member of this chamber would agree that, as we go to committee and more public hearings on Bill 73, we are going to get improvement of the proposed legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to stop. I'm going to let my colleague from Beaches–East York continue the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Taras Natyshak): The member for Beaches–East York.

Mr. Arthur Potts: Thank you, Speaker. What an honour to be able to address this House with you in the chair today. It's a very novel experience for me, and I'm delighted to have you there.

Let me start off by saying that I'm absolutely delighted for this chance to speak to Bill 73. I've known the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for many, many years in the capacity of many different portfolios. I know you to be extremely well-researched and thoughtful, and you put your all—

Hon. Ted McMeekin: Some more.

Mr. Arthur Potts: —some more, yes—into every portfolio.

My neighbour here, the member from Northumberland–Quinte West, says we'll go to the committee, we'll

have amendments, and we'll finally get it right. I have a lot more praise for this bill than I think the member next to me did, because yes, there may be an amendment or two, but I know that you put a lot of thoughtful work into getting this bill right where it is right now and, of course, looking for other ways we might improve it here and there—little bits and pieces. But congratulations for bringing forward a tremendous bill which will help so much in planning in Ontario.

What I'm particularly interested in speaking to is this whole section 37 opportunity. As the member from Scarborough—Agincourt was saying, what you see so often in the city of Toronto, with the section 37 monies, is that it's always sort of left in a vacuum about where they actually ended up going.

In my neighbourhood, we've got a beautiful development at Dundas and Carlaw going up—Streetcar—where their section 37 money is going to a fantastic theatre, conditional on them getting additional extra funding for that development to make it whole. If that funding doesn't come up, you always wonder: Then what happens to that section 37 money?

What we know is going to happen with this bill is, it will be absolutely crystal clear, on a project-by-project basis, and on some level of an annual reporting at the municipal level, that all the section 37 monies that are collected are being used in the way that was intended and that was projected, so that there is an accountability to it.

I think it speaks so much to how our party, this government, does go down this route to try to clarify, to bring accountability and oversight into decision-making, through all the boards and agencies that it operates within, and the municipalities, which are essentially creatures of the province.

We go to the Ontario Municipal Board questions. The member from Windsor—Tecumseh talked about the private member's bill of my colleague over here from Etobicoke—Lakeshore. The question came up: Why wasn't this included as part of it?

Of course, as was very clearly said by the minister, that's part of a continuing review, which is coming forward. I'm sure, and I'm positive, that the very thoughtful insights that the member from Etobicoke—Lakeshore has put into his thinking around the OMB, from his considerable experience at city hall, and as a trained architect and planner—no doubt, his considerable experience will be involved in populating what the right language and what the right opportunities are, with the Ontario Municipal Board.

I remember, when we spoke to the member's private member's bill, Bill 39, that there was a very interesting exchange I had with the member from Oxford. In my community, it's so important that we rein in how the Ontario Municipal Board works, because it tends to go overboard in reversing and rejecting plans that the neighbours and the citizens have put together with the municipality, whereas, in his view—he spoke at length about how they need the Ontario Municipal Board in order to correct misbegotten plans at the municipal level.

There is almost a rural-urban split on how people perceive it. I'm confident that we'll find the capacity to make sure we get the rules right, so that both rural and urban opportunities will be looked after.

In the Beach, in Beaches—East York, I have sort of two different worlds: that which is south of Danforth, and that which is north of Danforth.

South of Danforth, and you learn all through the election—it's a beautiful community. They're extraordinarily well organized, and they almost universally are organized around opposition to development. Or, maybe to put it more succinctly, they're there to try to make sure development is right and it fits into the character of the neighbourhood.

We have a group that we call the Greater Beach Neighbourhood Association, which is really an amalgam of 14 or 16 different residential associations in the south end, at Queen Street or at Kingston Road, Gerrard Street, and south of Danforth, where those communities often react to a development. They gather and they organize so that they can take matters to the OMB, to make sure they get the planning right.

I believe this bill will help, because you'll have planning advisory committees which will go to making sure that the secondary plans and the official plans, as they affect these individual neighbourhoods, are well thought out, so that when they go to the board, there won't be an opportunity to overturn them, because they've got them right.

We'll also have local appeal bodies, so that many matters—within the Planning Act, we can't change how the OMB operates, but we can change the kinds of things that it has oversight over. That's what I think we're doing—and doing very effectively—with this bill, so that local municipalities will have an appeal body, so that for some matters coming out of the committee of adjustment, it's not necessary to go to the OMB. We can look at and deal with them where they are, at the local appeal level.

With that, Speaker, I'd like to turn over the time to the member for Mississauga—Streetsville.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Taras Natyshak): Further debate?

Mr. Bob Delaney: Speaker, I'd like to begin with just a little anecdote. A number of years ago, I was at a seminar in the United States, and it was being conducted by a transit guru who had planned transit systems all over Asia and in parts of the United States, and he was talking about the preconditions necessary to effectively and economically, and in a timely manner, deliver transit projects on budget and on time. He said you can summarize these principles in three words: "Density is everything." Density is something that stems from a good, well-supported municipal plan. One of the things that the province won an award for, almost 10 years ago, was in fact its own plan for Ontario. In this vein, I'm looking at some of the clauses that are proposed here in Bill 73.

1740

Very clearly, as a municipality develops and tries to implement things within that award-winning plan, which is called Places to Grow, one of the things that the GTA

will do—which are very clear, if you have travelled in Europe or in Asia—is to densify. As soon as you propose densification, one of the things that you know at present is that you're likely to run into an appeal to every conceivable board.

Just to resolve some of these disputes—I'm just going to quickly run over a few of the measures that Bill 73 proposes. For example—and this may seem self-evident, but it isn't the case now: Require appellants to provide clearer reasons for appeals. At the moment, you can take a municipality's official plan and appeal it, really, without any basis, and you can take it one or two levels and then have your appeal dismissed and dismissed. All you do is basically say to the municipality, "You may get what you want, but we are going to be able to slow this thing down." But if what you need is that density, to be able to build the kind of community that's going to be a sustainable one, you're hoping to yourself, "Would the province please give us the tools to ensure that people can't appeal our municipal plan for reasons that are either meaningless or frivolous?" That's one of the things that this plan does.

It also removes the ability for appellants to appeal an entire new official plan. If you're a municipality, one of the things that you've asked the province of Ontario is, "Can we have some sort of autonomy in choosing what developments happen within our borders?" There's a series of checks and balances in doing development in the province of Ontario, but once we've achieved that compromise, one of the things this does is it says to people who wish to appeal it, "You can't appeal the whole thing. You have to tell us what is in there that you don't like, and you've got to show that you've got grounds for an appeal."

Hopefully, this should take some of the frivolous and vexatious cases away from the Ontario Municipal Board and from other forms of appeal, and also be able to resolve them and allow a city not merely to have control over development within its borders but to be able to get on with the job in a timely manner.

It also provides enhanced opportunities for alternative dispute resolution. What that means, in very practical terms, is, does this actually have to go before an adjudicatory body? Must it go to a judge, a tribunal, the Ontario Municipal Board or anything equivalent? Is there a way that the parties can get together and, in the presence of an arbitrator, a mediator or whatever, come to a conclusion that this particular dispute either does or doesn't have basis, and be able, in a cost-effective and a timely manner, to resolve it?

If you're sitting on a municipal council, you really want to read this bill, because there are a lot of things that you're going to be looking at and saying, "Thank heavens. We've been asking for this for a long time."

Bill 73 is an important piece of legislation. I look forward to it getting speedy passage.

I thank the Chair for his time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Etobicoke Centre.

Mr. Yvan Baker: I'm really pleased to be able to speak to this bill. I appreciate the comments being made by my colleagues as well as the members opposite.

My community, Etobicoke Centre, is a suburban community. We have buses in our community, but we don't have mass transit. Most people rely on cars to move around. It's a beautiful community. We have a number of developments that have recently been proposed for our community that would really shape or affect the communities to which they've been proposed. Developments in a community like Etobicoke Centre are something that have to be looked at very, very carefully because the community is a community that's established and people enjoy a certain way of life. People have moved to that community because they value the quality of life in that community, and when developments get proposed, that can be very impactful on the local community and the quality of life.

When I think about some of the developments that have recently been proposed in our community, I think about Humbertown plaza, which some of you may be familiar with, around Dundas and Royal York, where a developer applied to build a large condominium and retail complex. The Humber Valley Village Residents' Association very effectively raised money, brought forward and advocated on behalf of the community and was able to negotiate a reduced development with the developer.

I think about what's happening now in Markland Wood, which is in the southwestern part of my riding, where a development has been proposed, and many of the residents are very concerned.

I know that I've met with members of the Glen Agar Residents Association. That's a group of residents who have come together because they're concerned about a development that is in the initial planning stages in that community.

These are three parts of my community that represent thousands and tens of thousands of people, and residents' associations have advocated on behalf of those communities because they're concerned about the impact on the community of these developments.

If there's one thing that I've learned from going through this process and working with the various organizations and communities that I've talked about, it is that the communities have a very important role to play, or should have an important role to play, in how their communities get developed. When applications get filed for development, particularly in an established community, those communities, those residents, those community associations who speak for the residents and advocate for the residents, can play a part in that planning process and can play a part to be able to respond to what's been proposed.

I know there are a number of components to this bill, but the one that I'm particularly interested in and want to speak to today is the role that communities will be able to play in the development process and this element that I think the ministry refers to as "enhancing citizen engagement"; for example, requiring that municipalities and

approval authorities explain how public input affected their planning decision. It's one thing to have a meeting, to listen and then make a decision; it's another thing to link that input with the decision and help residents understand that. That's really requiring, in my mind, accountability to the residents. I think that's a really good thing and an important thing.

Require that municipal official plans include locally designed public consultation policies: It's not enough to say we consulted. You have to have a policy and an approach. Again, this requires accountability to the residents to be able to say, "Here's how we're going to consult with you." I think that's important.

Increasing the use of planning advisory committees and ensuring citizen membership on these committees: I think that's another important mechanism through which communities can have input into the planning process.

I started my remarks by talking about how developments can impact a community. I gave three examples in my community of Etobicoke Centre. Like I said, if there's one thing I learned, it's that communities must have a voice and a meaningful role in making sure that these developments are handled responsibly and that the communities can maintain the quality of life that they've become accustomed to.

These changes are particularly interesting, and I think as we look forward to the consultations around the OMB and some of the reforms that may potentially be proposed there, it's really exciting for a community like Etobicoke Centre.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. John Yakabuski: I wanted to thank the member, but I guess it would be members for their speeches today on Bill 73, because the government tends not to put a speaker up for the whole time; they just share it.

I've only got a couple of minutes. I'm looking forward to the time after the House rises for the summer recess; we'll have a chance to speak to this in a more complete way in the fall. But it would be nice if, during the summer, the government would actually go out and do some consultation on this, because they brought in the legislation without the consultation.

1750

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Wrong.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Now, what we really need to hear from the people—we need to hear from the people all across Ontario. This is a bill that affects everybody. It's not a narrow bill; it's a very broad bill. If you look at the number of things they're changing in the act, it's quite substantial. I think that it would behoove the government to get a little more feedback from the people, because I know there's nobody in my riding who was talked to about this bill. AMO has yet to really make a decision on how they feel about this bill.

So where was the consultation? I heard the member from Northumberland—Quinte West rattling in the background, saying there was lots of consultation. We'd like to know where it was. Was there any in Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, I say to my friend Lou? He would

have to say back to me, "No, there was not." For the past 12 years, municipalities have spoken over and over again about how changes that this Liberal government has made have not been in concert with consultations with the municipalities.

I would have much preferred a broad consultative process with municipalities to work on a bill that—we understand there need to be changes to the Planning Act, but it can't always be a top-down kind of thing. Sometimes, it just makes more sense to hear from the people first and then put together a bill that everyone can be happy with.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Ms. Catherine Fife: I think our fundamental disappointment with Bill 73 is that the bill still does not sufficiently protect municipalities from needless appeals to the OMB. As I mentioned in my previous hit, Waterloo region has gone through five years of fighting an unelected, undemocratic board that overruled the municipality in their planning process.

I'm channeling a little bit of Rosario Marchese today, because he wrote an op-ed in response when this review was first started. He said, "Here's what makes the OMB so unique: While the OMB does have adjudicative powers, like a court of appeal, it also has policy-making powers, like a government ministry. This is profoundly undemocratic." He would say probably—

Interjection: God bless.

Ms. Catherine Fife: —"God bless" at the bottom of that.

Courts cannot create policy, but the OMB can, and it does. Then communities have to react to that policy creation. "The OMB is not a court, a Legislature or a ministry. It is a fourth branch of government, unelected and accountable to no one." Those are the words of Mr. Marchese. Of course, we agree with him. What a missed opportunity to have Bill 73 address this.

In Waterloo region, we spent five years fighting the Ontario Municipal Board's decision, which found in favour of the developers. They added 1,000 additional hectares on a 10-year consultative process which conformed to the provincial policy of good Places to Grow.

The Waterloo region government and municipalities, duly elected, were following the leadership and the guidance and the legislation that has caused us to actually plan for intensification, which is the smart thing to do. The OMB overruled that, and then we had to spend \$1.7 million fighting that. Where did that money go? Well, \$640,000 went to appeals and \$625,000 went to the legal and expert witnesses. The lawyers did very well.

What a missed opportunity that this legislation does not address this.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I'm very pleased to respond to the comments by my colleagues from Beaches—East York, Mississauga—Streetsville and Etobicoke Centre on Bill 73, which will, if passed, amend the Planning Act.

One of the areas, as Minister of Education, that I'm particularly interested in is the section on increasing municipal transparency, which would require more detailed reporting from municipalities about parkland fees which they've collected. In particular, it would change the parkland dedication rate for cash in lieu and try to incent the actual acquisition of parkland, and it would require more municipalities to prepare park plans in consultation with school boards and the public to facilitate planning for parkland green space and park facilities.

So let me put that in English, because it's not at all clear what that means. In my municipality, in Guelph, in my hometown, the two school boards and the municipality actually do quite a good job of working together on planning issues, because the municipality, when a new subdivision is being planned, actually has the authority to ask for some of the land to be dedicated to parkland. The two boards and the municipality will often work together to have some land dedicated for parkland and then the two neighbourhood school sites co-located with the parkland, which means that in the long haul everybody can use the parkland. There's a good parkland plan for that.

But that doesn't happen in every municipality. In lots of municipalities, the municipality just takes some cash from the developer. They don't create parkland, and there's a bit of a mess in the long haul when all of a sudden you've got development after development after development and no parkland. This will change that.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): It looks like the minister had a drive-by there.

Questions and comments?

Mr. Jim McDonell: It's always a pleasure to rise, especially when we talk about the Planning Act and opening it up, because there's no question that the Planning Act causes a number of issues, especially in rural Ontario. I'll talk just for a second about the issue that the Minister of Education brought up, and that was parkland. When you're dealing with small subdivisions, and we're talking 10, 15 lots, it doesn't make sense—you know, parks in a rural area are done generally by area. We don't have the benefit of the large subdivisions.

So sometimes it may have to be looked at, because I know there are some terms around trying to quantify what the cash transfer should be or whether it's a finished lot or unserviced land that should be transferred over. But the basis is, we like to create regional parks that would fit all the small, little subdivisions in one area, because that's the only thing that makes sense in rural Ontario.

I think it's a good point. It has to be addressed and clarified because, I know from our side, there's a lot of confusion. Developers aren't happy, municipalities aren't happy, and in the end, it wastes a lot of time. But for the most part, I always saw the OMB as a necessity, something that is in a way a kind of sober second thought. It made sure that councils were following the regulations. It takes some of the political side out of it. Especially

maybe in some of the smaller councils, it can be a little bit of, "Well, it's Joe down the street. But Harry up the road is a little bit different," and that's not right.

So I think we want to make sure that that opportunity is there. There's no doubt that there needs to be some clarifications and some changes made, updated with some of the new growth development initiatives that are under way. We're looking forward to seeing that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Etobicoke Centre has two minutes.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Thank you, Speaker. I'd like to thank all my colleagues and the members opposite for their remarks.

I want to just quickly touch on something that was a recurring theme in the remarks from some of the members opposite, which was around the OMB. I know from experiences in my own community that we have members in my community who have concerns about the OMB and have thoughts on how it could be improved. That's why we're going to be undertaking a review of the OMB. As part of that review, I know that there are a lot of thoughts on all sides of the aisle about how that could be improved. I think that's the opportunity for those comments and those ideas to be brought in.

I know that I'll be engaging a number of the residents' associations, the homeowners associations in my community to participate in that discussion because they've had the experience with developments and they're very knowledgeable about the impact that the OMB can have. Particularly, in my community, the Humber Valley Village Residents' Association had to think about how they would work with the developer, knowing full well that this particular application could be appealed to the OMB. They handled it effectively, but there are certainly opportunities for improvement to the OMB.

The OMB is not being addressed here. What's being addressed here is a number of other things that are important. The OMB review will be taking place, and I'm sure the minister will look forward to your comments about the OMB at that time.

But I just want to go back briefly as well to talk about what is in this bill that I think is relevant to all our communities. The Minister of Education referred to the issues around parkland. I think that's absolutely critical. If I think about my community of Etobicoke Centre, this is a critical issue.

Again, I want to go back to the issue of how communities will now be able to be involved in planning their communities and responding to applications that are being put forward within their municipalities, within their communities. I think that's one of the highlights of this bill for me, and I think it will serve our communities and our respective ridings very well.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): It being 6 o'clock right on the dot, this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1800.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiles, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glenarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB) Miller, Norm (PC) Miller, Paul (NDP)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore Parry Sound–Muskoka Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB) Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Halton Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Natyshak, Taras (NDP) Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Essex Chatham-Kent–Essex	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
		Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Oraziotti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Pettapiece, Randy (PC) Potts, Arthur (LIB) Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB) Rinaldi, Lou (LIB) Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB) Sattler, Peggy (NDP) Scott, Laurie (PC) Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	Perth–Wellington Beaches–East York Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord Northumberland–Quinte West Guelph London West / London-Ouest Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock York West / York-Ouest	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP) Smith, Todd (PC) Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB) Tabuns, Peter (NDP) Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB) Taylor, Monique (NDP) Thibeault, Glenn (LIB) Thompson, Lisa M. (PC) Vanthof, John (NDP) Vernile, Daiene (LIB) Walker, Bill (PC) Wilson, Jim (PC) Wong, Soo (LIB) Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton Prince Edward–Hastings Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud Toronto–Danforth Mississauga–Erindale Hamilton Mountain Sudbury Huron–Bruce Timiskaming–Cochrane Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound Simcoe–Grey Scarborough–Agincourt Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
		Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Yakabuski, John (PC) Yurek, Jeff (PC) Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke Elgin–Middlesex–London Willowdale	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
		Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
		Premier / Première ministre
		Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
		Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉES PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Vacant
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo
Han Dong, Michael Harris
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala
Monique Taylor
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson
Mike Colle, Grant Crack
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Fraser
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins
Jim McDonnell, Randy Pettapiece
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadi
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadi
Todd Smith
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Han Dong, John Fraser
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile
Bill Walker
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioic Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioic Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott
Han Dong, Sylvia Jones
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

Assistive Devices Program

Ms. Laurie Scott.....	4887
Hon. Eric Hoskins.....	4887

Class size

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky.....	4888
Hon. Liz Sandals.....	4888

Child poverty

Ms. Daiene Vernile.....	4888
Hon. Deborah Matthews.....	4889

Long-term care

Mr. Jim Wilson.....	4889
Hon. Dipika Damerla.....	4889

Forestry industry

Mr. Gilles Bisson.....	4890
Hon. Bill Mauro.....	4890

Accessibility for the disabled

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris.....	4891
Hon. Brad Duguid.....	4891

Visitors

Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	4891
Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	4891

DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFFÉRÉS

Building Ontario Up Act (Budget Measures), 2015, Bill 91, Mr. Sousa / Loi de 2015 pour favoriser l'essor de l'Ontario (mesures budgétaires), projet de loi 91, M. Sousa

Third reading agreed to.....	4892
------------------------------	------

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson.....	4892
Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	4892
Ms. Soo Wong.....	4892
Ms. Eleanor McMahon.....	4892
Mr. Jagmeet Singh.....	4893
Mr. Arthur Potts.....	4893
Mr. Yvan Baker.....	4893
Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	4893
Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	4893
Hon. Bob Chiarelli.....	4893

Wearing of pins

Ms. Eleanor McMahon.....	4893
Mr. Gilles Bisson.....	4893
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	4893

Visitors

Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	4893
-------------------------	------

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

Académie catholique Ange-Gabriel

M. Steve Clark.....	4893
---------------------	------

Mary Ann Mulhern

Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	4894
-------------------------	------

Ontario Flag Day / Jour du drapeau de l'Ontario

Mr. Yvan Baker.....	4894
---------------------	------

Agri-food industry

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson.....	4894
---------------------------	------

Fort Erie Race Track

Mr. Wayne Gates.....	4894
----------------------	------

Anniversary of Barrie tornado

Ms. Ann Hoggarth.....	4895
-----------------------	------

Lake Nipissing walleye fishery

Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	4895
------------------------	------

Girls Government

Mrs. Cristina Martins.....	4895
----------------------------	------

Great Blue Heron Charity Casino

Mr. Granville Anderson.....	4896
-----------------------------	------

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES / RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS

Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris.....	4896
Report adopted.....	4896

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	4896
Debate adjourned.....	4896

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

Police Record Checks Reform Act, 2015, Bill 113, Mr. Naqvi / Loi de 2015 sur la réforme des vérifications de dossiers de police, projet de loi 113, M. Naqvi

First reading agreed to.....	4896
Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	4897

Municipal Action on Accessibility for Persons With Disabilities Act, 2015, Bill 114, Mr. Hatfield / Loi de 2015 sur l'action municipale en faveur de l'accessibilité pour les personnes handicapées, projet de loi 114, M. Hatfield

First reading agreed to.....	4897
Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	4897

MOTIONS

Consideration of Bill 13

Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4897
Motion agreed to	4897

Ontario Bike Month Act, 2015, Bill 13,

Ms. McMahon / Loi de 2015 sur le Mois de la bicyclette en Ontario, projet de loi 13,
Mme McMahon

Third reading agreed to	4897
-------------------------------	------

Consideration of Bill 61

Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4897
Motion agreed to	4897

Terry Fox Day Act, 2015, Bill 61, Ms. Wong / Loi de 2015 sur le Jour de Terry Fox, projet de loi 61,

Mme Wong

Third reading agreed to	4898
-------------------------------	------

Consideration of Bill 101

Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4898
Motion agreed to	4898

Ontario Flag Day Act, 2015, Bill 101, Mr. Baker / Loi de 2015 sur le Jour du drapeau de l'Ontario, projet de loi 101, M. Baker

Second reading agreed to	4898
--------------------------------	------

Ontario Flag Day Act, 2015, Bill 101, Mr. Baker / Loi de 2015 sur le Jour du drapeau de l'Ontario, projet de loi 101, M. Baker

Third reading agreed to	4898
-------------------------------	------

Private members' public business

Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4898
Motion agreed to	4898

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Curriculum

Ms. Sylvia Jones	4898
------------------------	------

Accident benefits

Mr. Jagmeet Singh	4898
-------------------------	------

Unlicensed taxis

Mr. Vic Dhillon	4899
-----------------------	------

Electronic cigarettes

Mr. Randy Hillier	4899
-------------------------	------

Environmental protection

Mr. John Fraser	4899
-----------------------	------

Lake Nipissing walleye fishery

Mr. Victor Fedeli	4899
-------------------------	------

Missing persons

Ms. Catherine Fife	4899
--------------------------	------

Lung health

Mrs. Cristina Martins	4900
-----------------------------	------

Energy policies

Mr. Randy Hillier	4900
-------------------------	------

Highway improvement

Mr. Taras Natyshak	4900
--------------------------	------

French-language education

Mr. Arthur Potts	4900
------------------------	------

Hospital funding

Ms. Sylvia Jones	4901
------------------------	------

Privatisation des biens publics

Mme France Gélinas	4901
--------------------------	------

Wind turbines

Mr. Jim McDonell	4901
------------------------	------

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015, Bill 6, Mr. Duguid / Loi de 2015 sur l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la prospérité, projet de loi 6, M. Duguid

Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4902
Mr. Ted Arnott	4903
Mr. Taras Natyshak	4906
Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn	4909
Third reading vote deferred	4911

Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015, Bill 73, Mr. McMeekin / Loi de 2015 pour une croissance intelligente de nos collectivités, projet de loi 73, M. McMeekin

Mr. Percy Hatfield	4911
Mr. Lou Rinaldi	4914
Mr. Victor Fedeli	4914
Ms. Catherine Fife	4915
Hon. Ted McMeekin	4915
Mr. Percy Hatfield	4915
Ms. Soo Wong	4916
Mr. Arthur Potts	4916
Mr. Bob Delaney	4917
Mr. Yvan Baker	4918
Mr. John Yakabuski	4919
Ms. Catherine Fife	4919
Hon. Liz Sandals	4919
Mr. Jim McDonell	4920
Mr. Yvan Baker	4920
Second reading debate deemed adjourned	4920

CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Wednesday 3 June 2015 / Mercredi 3 juin 2015

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015, Bill 66, Mr. Murray / Loi de 2015 sur la protection des Grands Lacs, projet de loi 66, M. Murray

Mr. Jeff Yurek	4867
Mr. Taras Natyshak	4868
Hon. James J. Bradley	4868
Mr. Jim McDonell	4868
Mr. John Vanthof	4869
Mr. Jeff Yurek	4869
Mr. Taras Natyshak	4869
Mr. Chris Ballard	4872
Mr. Garfield Dunlop	4872
Mr. Michael Mantha	4873
Ms. Soo Wong	4873
Mr. Taras Natyshak	4873
Mr. Jack MacLaren	4873
Mr. Peter Tabuns	4876
Hon. David Zimmer	4876
Mr. Jim McDonell	4876
Mr. Taras Natyshak	4876
Mr. Jack MacLaren	4877
Second reading debate deemed adjourned	4877

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4877
Mr. Monte McNaughton	4877
Miss Monique Taylor	4877
Mr. Chris Ballard	4877
Ms. Cindy Forster	4877
Hon. Brad Duguid	4877
Mr. Todd Smith	4877
Ms. Peggy Sattler	4877
Ms. Ann Hoggarth	4877
Ms. Sylvia Jones	4877
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky	4877
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn	4878
Mr. John Yakabuski	4878
Ms. Catherine Fife	4878
Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris	4878
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson	4878
Miss Monique Taylor	4878
Ms. Sophie Kiwala	4878

Mrs. Gila Martow	4878
Mr. Gilles Bisson	4878
Mr. Yvan Baker	4878
Mr. Victor Fedeli	4878
Hon. Mitzie Hunter	4878
Mr. Garfield Dunlop	4878
Mrs. Cristina Martins	4878
Mr. Norm Miller	4878
Hon. Michael Gravelle	4878
Hon. Deborah Matthews	4878
Hon. Michael Coteau	4878
Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris	4878
Mr. Percy Hatfield	4878
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac)	4878

Residential schools

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4879
Hon. David Zimmer	4879
Mr. Jim Wilson	4880
Ms. Andrea Horwath	4880
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac)	4881

ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

Ontario budget

Mr. Victor Fedeli	4881
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4881

Privatization of public assets

Mr. John Yakabuski	4882
Hon. Bob Chiarelli	4882

Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath	4883
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4883

Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath	4884
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4884
Hon. Bob Chiarelli	4885

Justice of the peace

Ms. Sylvia Jones	4885
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur	4885

Ontario Energy Board

Mr. Peter Tabuns	4886
Hon. Bob Chiarelli	4886

Pipeline

Mr. John Fraser	4886
Hon. Bob Chiarelli	4887

Continued on inside back cover



No. 93

N° 93

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly
of Ontario

First Session, 41st Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario

Première session, 41^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Thursday 4 June 2015

Jeudi 4 juin 2015



Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière
Deborah Deller

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 4 June 2015

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 4 juin 2015

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Good morning. Please join me in prayer.
Prayers.

ANNUAL REPORT, FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES COMMISSIONER

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I beg to inform the House that today I have laid upon the table the 2014-15 annual report from the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario.

MEMBERS' EXPENDITURES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I also beg to inform the House that I have laid upon the table individual members' expenditures for the fiscal year 2014-15. Members will find copies of these in their desks.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Good morning, Speaker. I believe we have unanimous consent to move forward on a motion without notice regarding private bills.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Agriculture is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.
Minister?

Hon. Jeff Leal: I move that the orders for second and third reading of the following private bills shall be considered consecutively and the questions on the motions for second and third reading of the bills be put immediately without debate: Bills Pr14, Pr15, Pr16, Pr17, Pr18, Pr19, Pr20, Pr21, Pr22; and

That Mr. Delaney may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr15 on behalf of Mr. Colle; and

That Mr. Vanthof may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr16 on behalf of Mr. Natyshak; and

That Mr. Vanthof may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr18 on behalf of Ms. Fife; and

That my good friend from Leeds–Grenville, Mr. Clark, may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr20 on behalf of Mr. Hudak; and

That Mr. Clark—he's going to be busy again—may move the motions for second and third reading on Bill Pr22 on behalf of Mr. Hudak.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Leal moves that the orders for second and third reading of the following private bills shall be—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Dispense.

Carried.

Motion agreed to.

OTTAWA SCHOOL DAY NURSERY INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Fraser moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr14, An Act to revive Ottawa School Day Nursery Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

OTTAWA SCHOOL DAY NURSERY INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Fraser moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr14, An Act to revive Ottawa School Day Nursery Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

DSPT INTERNATIONAL (CANADA) INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Delaney, on behalf of Mr. Colle, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr15, An Act to revive DSPT International (Canada) Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

DSPT INTERNATIONAL
(CANADA) INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Delaney, on behalf of Mr. Colle, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr15, An Act to revive DSPT International (Canada) Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

990046 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Vanthof, of behalf of Mr. Natyshak, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr16, An Act to revive 990046 Ontario Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

990046 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Vanthof, on behalf of Mr. Natyshak, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr16, An Act to revive 990046 Ontario Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

731149 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 2015

Mr. Bailey moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr17, An Act to revive 731149 Ontario Limited.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

731149 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 2015

Mr. Bailey moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr17, An Act to revive 731149 Ontario Limited.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

0910

CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL
GOVERNANCE INNOVATION ACT
(TAX RELIEF), 2015

Mr. Vanthof, on behalf of Ms. Fife, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr18, An Act respecting The Centre for International Governance Innovation.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL
GOVERNANCE INNOVATION ACT
(TAX RELIEF), 2015

Mr. Vanthof, on behalf of Ms. Fife, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr18, An Act respecting The Centre for International Governance Innovation.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT
ASSOCIATION ONTARIO ACT, 2015

Mr. Rinaldi moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr19, An Act respecting the Supply Chain Management Association Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT
ASSOCIATION ONTARIO ACT, 2015

Mr. Rinaldi moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr19, An Act respecting the Supply Chain Management Association Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

NIAGARA CENTRAL
DOROTHY RUNGELING
AIRPORT ACT, 2015

Mr. Clark, on behalf of Mr. Hudak, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr20, An Act to amend The Welland-Port Colborne Airport Act, 1976.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

NIAGARA CENTRAL
DOROTHY RUNGELING
AIRPORT ACT, 2015

Mr. Clark, on behalf of Mr. Hudak, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr20, An Act to amend The Welland-Port Colborne Airport Act, 1976.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

WEICHE ESTATES INC ACT, 2015

Mrs. McGarry moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr21, An Act to revive Weiche Estates Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

WEICHE ESTATES INC ACT, 2015

Mrs. McGarry moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr21, An Act to revive Weiche Estates Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

1476263 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Clark, on behalf of Mr. Hudak, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr22, An Act to revive 1476263 Ontario Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

1476263 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Clark, on behalf of Mr. Hudak, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr22, An Act to revive 1476263 Ontario Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

GREAT LAKES PROTECTION ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA PROTECTION
DES GRANDS LACS

Resuming the debate adjourned on June 3, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin / Projet de loi 66, Loi visant la protection et le rétablissement du bassin des Grands Lacs et du fleuve Saint-Laurent.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further debate?

Mr. John Vanthof: As always, it's an honour to stand in this House and represent the views of the folks back home in Timiskaming-Cochrane and of my NDP caucus members. Today I'm going to focus on the role of agriculture with Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin; en français, Loi visant la protection et le rétablissement du bassin des Grands Lacs et du fleuve Saint-Laurent.

With the title of the act, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence basin, people immediately think of the shoreline of the Great Lakes. As was mentioned yesterday by the member from Essex, we have the longest shoreline on the Great Lakes of all the jurisdictions around it. So we have a big responsibility. There's no question about that: We have a big responsibility.

The Great Lakes also hold 20% of the world's fresh water. So, again, we have a great responsibility. I don't think anyone is denying that we have a great responsibility, along with the other jurisdictions that surround the Great Lakes. There are millions of people who live around the Great Lakes who depend on the Great Lakes.

It's been a very interesting debate. I've heard other speakers say that we are doing better or we are doing worse than other jurisdictions, and while it's valuable to look at what other jurisdictions are doing—it's very valuable—we have to look at what we can do, not what others are doing.

But where we have to be cognizant of what others are doing is when we look at the industries that surround the Great Lakes. One of those industries is agriculture. And one fact that's come up over and over and over—and it's a very interesting fact, and I think a lot of farmers in the province might not know this, but 95% of the agricultural land in Ontario is within the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence basin—95%, virtually all. So this act impacts virtually all

the farmland in Ontario. That's not necessarily a bad thing, but it's a fact.

I'd like to be very clear with this bill: We support the principle of this bill. This bill might be a very good piece of legislation, it might just be a press release, or it might be a very detrimental piece of legislation for the agriculture sector and it might not protect the environment. It all depends on how it's interpreted by this government, when passed, and by future governments. Speaker, the devil is always in the details, and as with many bills, this bill is kind of lacking in the details.

There seems to be a perceived conflict between the agricultural community and the environmental community, and I'd like to set the record straight. Farmers are environmentalists. Farmers are true environmentalists because we have to deal with the environment every day. We live with the environment because we make our living within the environment. The environment to us isn't a talking point or a way to raise money or an abstract thing that we talk about. We deal with it every day. I think that perhaps gives farmers a different outlook than others. That's why we look at this bill a bit more critically than others. We appreciate that we need to work together to protect the Great Lakes. And the agricultural community is a bit—I'm trying to find the right word—concerned that it's to "restore the Great Lakes," because farmers across this province have already made huge strides, as have other industries across the province.

I'm very familiar, Speaker, with what has happened across this province over the years regarding agriculture. I remember when I started farming. It was very common to see manure runoff running off into gullies. That was common; it happened on my farm. Speaker, when I bought my farm. Over the years, we've changed that. We've changed that with the help of various levels of government and various governments. We've changed that.

0920

On our former farm—sold it two years ago—no runoff leaves that farm. They have 300-day storage, and that's very important. It might not be a big deal for lay people, but you have to have enough storage, when you have livestock, so you can store the effluent—the manure from the livestock—so that you can spread it on your fields when it makes the most sense for the environment and when it makes the most sense for the farmer. Manure is a fertilizer, and it doesn't make any sense for a farmer to waste it. That's why we've made huge strides in controlling that. As with any substance, it's a good thing, but if there's too much of it, it's a pollutant; that's the way life works. We've made huge strides with that.

Another area that I know from my dairy farming past: A lot of dairy farms in the past used a lot of soap. If there's one thing about dairy farming, you have to clean your equipment if you milk two times a day—some milk three times a day, and now, with robot milkers, you milk all day. You have to wash all the time. That equipment has to be as clean as any equipment in any commercial

kitchen, because we're producing food. But a by-product of that is that you use a lot of soap. Soap has a lot of phosphorus. In years gone by, some of that phosphorus used to go right into the ditch. That doesn't happen anymore. That's been stopped.

We've had lots of experiments on how to make that work. I know that on our own farm, we had a septic system. Standard septic systems do not work for milk house runoff. They don't work. We tried that; it failed. Every farm has a different system. On our farm, it went into the same storage where the manure went, because phosphorus, if it's not over-applied, is actually a benefit to us all. It's when it's over-applied or used incorrectly that it becomes a pollutant—a very serious pollutant.

We've done a lot of those things over the years.

Another one I did on my farm was grassed waterways, through the Environmental Farm Plan—a great program, actually, that's been cut back severely. One way to stop pollutants from getting into surface water, and eventually into the Great Lakes basin, is to make sure, when you're doing things on the field, that you stay far enough away not only from rivers and streams but creeks and ditches. One way we've done that is grassed waterways. Instead of plowing or chisel plowing right up to the ditch, you leave X number of feet or metres, and that, in normal conditions, stops soil that contains phosphorus and nitrogen from going into the river.

We have made great strides. Farmers are environmentalists. But the difference is that farmers also have to make a living. We have to identify problems, but we also have to provide answers. It's not enough to just say, "Well, we have to stop doing this and this and this, and if you don't, we're going to fine you." That's basically all we read in this bill. We don't see solutions. Hopefully, those solutions are going to come later on when the guardians' council and all these things get fired up.

The more discussion we have, the better. I'm not sure that I would agree with some of the members of the Conservative Party who are worried about regulation on top of regulation. But, again, good regulation is a good thing. It's a benefit to society. Regulation for the sake of regulation is a detriment to us all. Farmers are no strangers to regulation. As farms get bigger, we are subject to more and more regulation, which in itself isn't necessarily a bad thing.

Again, under the Nutrient Management Act, farmers are subject to a lot of regulation. Depending on how many animals you have, you have to have enough land to make sure you can use manure as a benefit to your crops but not a detriment to the environment. You have to have enough land. You have to have enough storage. Those are all regulations you have to comply with. I've had people in my riding who have built barns in the last little while and were shocked at the amount of regulation they had to go through to get planning for that barn, to get approval. That's very frustrating for the individual farmer. We could maybe make it a bit less cumbersome; but the regulation itself isn't a bad thing, because it protects society.

What we're worried about with Bill 66 is that all the regulations that currently exist—the Nutrient Management Act, the Conservation Authorities Act; I believe there are 20 other ones. When you read this bill, it looks like this bill would supersede all those regulations. That's a problem. Because this act covers such a large area, geographically, the central planning idea, where it supersedes local planning, is a problem.

An example of that is the Green Energy Act. How could you screw up green energy? How you screw up green energy is by having the Green Energy Act supersede everything else. It's easier to build a solar farm on agricultural land in my riding than it is to build a farm building. That's wrong. That's where the Green Energy Act went wrong. This act has the danger—and I'm not saying it's going to, but the danger is there.

Interjection.

Mr. John Vanthof: That's not true, sir. In northern Ontario, they're building solar farms on the best land in Timiskaming; they're building solar farms all over, on our best land. This government says that northern Ontario is the future of agriculture. My riding has the best agricultural land in northern Ontario and there are solar farms going all over on the best land in northern Ontario. So to stay that this government is interested in agriculture in northern Ontario—based on that, it's a farce. That's the truth. And that's an example.

We are trying to make this act the best we can. We're not trying to make political speak or anything on this. We're trying to make this the best it can be, and there are problems. Again, we agree with the principle, but the fact that it could supersede everything is a problem. We see in this act there's a whole schedule for the amount of fines that could be levied, but we don't see anything in the act where, "Here is where society is going to help the various industries impacted and here's how they're going to help." We don't see anything in the act like that, and that's a problem.

Because all the advances we've made—we've made a lot of advances for ourselves, as all industry does. Farmers are out to make a living, but farmers are also out to protect the environment because every farmer wants—unfortunately, I didn't have that chance—to turn their farm over to their kids. The only way the kids are going to be successful is if the farmer has protected the growing capacity of his or her farm. And the only way you can do that is to be a good environmental steward. But when society wants to provide a better level of protection—which is society's choice; we agree—society, as a whole, also has to help provide the solutions.

When we were looking at putting grass waterways, when we were looking at going to conservation tillage, through the Environmental Farm Plan, the government, society—was a partner. Now, would we have done the same things without? Yes, but it would have taken long. So society decided that we want to fix any problems that exist as quickly as possible. Great. Then society also has a responsibility not just to say, "You have to do this and you have to do this," but also has a responsibility to say,

"You know, as a whole, we want to protect the environment." Quite frankly, farmland—we're the last ones, because once you've built houses and cities, to talk about protecting the environment—I'm sorry; it's just a moot point. That's a moot point.

0930

To expect the 3% of the population who are still farming the land to do all the things to protect what society hasn't paved over yet, to expect them to bear the full cost—that's ridiculous.

But we don't see that in this act and we're a bit worried, because our last experience—and this a very touchy subject—the neonic experience—society decided, through the government, that we were going to cut a certain usage of a pesticide. We're not opposed to that, but when the Ministry of the Environment asked for their input, they posted on the EBR during planting season, the busiest time of the year; the Minister of the Environment knew that.

That's an example of why, based on our past experience, the agricultural community questions whether the MOE really understands that to solve an environmental issue, you have to work together with the stakeholders and not just tell them and hope it all fares well, because in the end, that probably won't help the ministry, and it won't help the environment either.

Based on that experience, we're worried. The farm community is worried about Bill 66 based on the fact that there are no hearings that are going to be held outside of the hallowed skyscrapers of Toronto—because you know what? This bill isn't going to have much impact on the people who live in the condos that surround this place. It's not. The people who live in the condos have as much right as anyone to have an opinion on the environment—no question. But, honestly, they're not going to be impacted. It's the people who live in the country who are going to be impacted by this bill, and it's them who are going to have to take the steps to hopefully make this bill work. So they should be fully included in how to make this bill work. Will they always agree? No. But that's how our democracy is supposed to work.

It has already been decided we're not going to have any hearings on this bill, on the passage of this bill, outside of Toronto, but I would deeply suggest to the government that they take the time to actually listen to the agriculture community and to other sectors, because you know what? Foresters and miners are also environmentalists because they all work with the environment every day, and they've all made huge strides.

You have to look outside these halls. You have to look outside of interest groups. Interest groups have their place. They have changed our world for the better, but you have to go beyond them to the people who actually make the daily decisions on the land, in the forest and by the streams. Regulations, rules and laws have to be understood and have to make sense to those people, and if they don't, ultimately, we have all failed.

We support this legislation. We support the intent of this legislation, but we urge the government to actually

take this legislation seriously. Take it to the people. Make sure that you consult and make sure that you actually come up with solutions, not just regs and then look the other way when they go wrong. Come up with solutions, because solutions can be found, as has been found in agriculture in the past. I've focused on agriculture, but there are all kinds of other industries impacted here. I'm ag critic, I'm a farmer; I like to talk about farming.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I want to comment on the comments on agriculture that the member for Timiskaming—Cochrane made.

I totally agree that agriculture is a very important player in Great Lakes protection and in protection of our water. If I think of some of the things that I've seen happening in my own area—Guelph is in the Grand River watershed. Guelph is located on the Speed and Eramosa Rivers, which then feed into the Grand River. But one of the other rivers that feed into the Grand River is the Conestogo. The Conestogo River is one of those rivers that seems to meander, very flat, through a plain that's very prone to erosion, and if you look at the agricultural practices, historically you would find that the cattle were watering in the river, and of course that broke down the banks and you got the runoff and the cattle in the river and the erosion. It was becoming quite a problem. But with the help of the Grand River Conservation Authority working with farmers all along the Conestogo River, they changed their livestock management practices, got the cattle out of the river, and got the banks built up again with natural vegetation along the banks to stop the erosion.

It's now a totally different river. It's now restored to what it would have been more like historically, before people messed it up. It's a totally different river, and that's because the farmers all along the river, just as the member said, have changed their practices and have behaved like true environmentalists and restored that river to health.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Mr. Jim McDonell: It's always great to hear the member opposite's spin on farming, because I come from a farm too.

Farmers are very careful about their land. Over the last 40 years, you see a lot of changes in the way that they work the land. There are a lot of different technologies that have come in that weren't known, but as soon as a better way comes to do it, you see farmers using it. The no-till methods they use—it's all about water management and it's all about tiling and making sure that the land is useful.

Each summer you go through my riding of Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry—and our major industry is farming. The vast majority of territory is under crops. It's either under crops or under bush. It's something that farmers have always had a lot of care for.

I think we can look at the farms today and they're really something to marvel at, because they are a picture of production. They feed a lot more people per acre than they used to. If there hadn't been the changes that they've instituted over the years, a lot of people would be worse off in this world.

Canada is a major player in feeding a good percentage of the world, and that comes from the farms in Ontario. They're looking at ways of making even more land available in the North, and the beef farmers are hoping this government will work with them and actually turn over more crown land. As land becomes more and more important and more and more valuable, land is too expensive to graze cattle. So we have to move north, where the climate would work for them. Now it's land that's unproductive. It would be a great alternative for those properties.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments? The member from—I've got a mental block.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Nickel Belt.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Nickel Belt.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It's all good, Speaker. It's all good.

Well, although we're talking about the Great Lakes Protection Act, it also covers all of the watershed. You'll be happy to know that the people of Nickel Belt do live in the watershed and will be covered by that bill.

I wanted to give a very clear example. You will remember that in my riding, in Gogama, there was a horrific train derailment, where 33 of the cars caught on fire and crude oil spilled all over the river. It actually derailed on a bridge over top of a river, so you can imagine what the water looks like. You can imagine what all of the surrounding environment looks like.

0940

In all of that, this environmental disaster—although we have a bill that says you will “have to” protect, here we have a disaster where the environment certainly is in need of help, and we have a government that doesn't take CN to court. If it was a farmer who had done that kind of spill that went into a river, that went into the watershed, this farmer would pay the price—would lose the farm, literally.

But when a company like CN—and that wasn't the first time. Three weeks prior to that, on February 14, they had derailed again but that time, away from people and away from the public eye. This time, it was in the village of Gogama, right on the edge. If you drive on Highway 144, you can't miss it. It looks like a moon landscape. Everything has been taken off. There isn't a blade of grass, a stem. Nothing is left but the water and the disaster.

We have a government that doesn't do anything to hold CN to account. It doesn't hit them where it hurts, which is in the pocketbook. It doesn't help the people of Gogama bring those people to court for what they've

done to them. They do nothing but pass laws that will hinder our farmers.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I'm very pleased to rise today and speak on Bill 66. I wanted to just focus a little bit on the Great Lakes. They are indeed one of Ontario's greatest assets. The region has an annual GDP of \$5.2 trillion, which is the fourth-largest economy in the world.

I also wanted to reassure the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane that the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change does have every intention of collaborating soundly with many participants, and just to list a few: the Great Lakes ministers, whose ministries contribute to Ontario's Great Lakes Strategy; and the Great Lakes municipalities. The First Nations and Métis communities have a historic relationship with the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin, which is important for my community. The agricultural sector will be consulted. The recreational and tourism sector, the scientific community, environmental organizations and conservation authorities will all be consulted. We will be asking these organizations or these sectors who they would like to have represented. I think that's extremely important to highlight.

We also highly value the input by the First Nations and Métis communities on the protection of the Great Lakes, so they will be consulted as well. They were engaged on the previous versions of this bill, and their submissions were invaluable in informing the strengthened proposed Great Lakes Protection Act.

I'm very pleased to offer my support to this bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I now return to the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane.

Mr. John Vanthof: I'd like to thank the Minister of Education, the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, my colleague from Nickel Belt and the member from Kingston and the Islands.

I think the member from Nickel Belt gave a very good example. The Gogama incident is what we should really be looking at, looking at how we make sure that the regulations we have now are actually working and that we enforce them. That's a much tougher job than creating new laws, and I think Gogama is a really good example of that.

Just to show you—and I forgot to say it in my original speech—how big an area this impacts, if you go about seven and a half hours straight north of here, you'll hit the Arctic watershed. There's a sign in my riding on Highway 11, and that's the Arctic watershed. From that point south, it goes to the Atlantic. From that point north, the water flows to the Arctic. Everything from that point south and very far west is in the Great Lakes basin. It's a huge area, geographically.

The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry talked about the future of agricultural land in northern Ontario. There is a lot of agricultural land yet to be developed in northern Ontario and, actually, most of it is north of that point. The discussion has to be had on whether we should have different rules for land north or

south, and I would argue no. If you're going to protect the environment, then the rules for farmers should be the same across the province.

That's not addressed in this act, and that's a problem, because you'll have a mishmash of regulations, and you'll have regulations where no one really understands what's going on. That's a huge problem.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 2, 2015, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Murray has moved second reading of Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Pursuant to standing order 28(h), this vote will be deferred until after question period.

Second reading vote deferred.

SMART GROWTH FOR OUR COMMUNITIES ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 POUR UNE CROISSANCE INTELLIGENTE DE NOS COLLECTIVITÉS

Resuming the debate adjourned on June 3, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 73, An Act to amend the Development Charges Act, 1997 and the Planning Act/ Projet de loi 73, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur les redevances d'aménagement et la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Michael Harris: It's a nice opportunity to speak. It was fortunately brought to my attention this morning that I have the great opportunity to make remarks on this bill. I'd like to thank Jessica, obviously, for allowing me to speak to the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act for 20 minutes this morning.

We've heard that the proposed legislation considers changes to the Planning Act and the Development Charges Act, to update those acts and reflect the need for improvements to keep up with the evolving needs and issues being faced by municipalities across the province.

While we on this side of the House are supportive and understand the need for improvement, in many ways Bill 73 is a bit like putting the cart before the horse—if there are any horses left in Ontario, that is. By bringing forth a bill on needed improvements before hearing from all of those directly impacted, that, in effect, puts legislation before consultation. It's like putting a cake in the oven before you have all the ingredients. In the end, you run the risk of ending up with a result that is only half-baked. Who likes a cake without the ingredients, Speaker?

Last fall we saw the Premier, in an attempt to instill confidence in her election, boast of transparency and accountability—that she would soon leave at the curb—and

publicly release a series of ministers' mandate letters to direct their actions over the course of this government. The problem is, in many cases, as we've seen in the months since, these letters turned out to be little more than a public relations exercise not really worth the paper they're written on.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs received one of those mandate letters, Speaker. Do you know what it said? It called on the minister to conduct a full review of the Ontario Municipal Board, yet today we have a bill before us that tables a number of changes to the board before the review is even conducted—cart before the horse, Speaker; perhaps a few ingredients left out of the bowl.

It begs the question: If you know that you are mandated to conduct a full review of the OMB and you know that the government had only just launched the land use planning review of the greenbelt, the Niagara Escarpment, the Oak Ridges moraine and the growth plan—a review that impacts the Planning Act—then why do you go forward, back in March, to bring this legislation forward before the results of those reviews are in?

0950

The answer, Speaker, is that in typical Wynne Liberal government fashion, they don't feel they have to hear the public's opinions that these reviews elicit because they feel they already know what's in our best interests. So they speak first, listen later, and then pat us on the head and tell us everything is going to be okay. Well, it's not all right. There is a need for improvements, and it would have done this government good to listen to what those impacted had to say before moving forward on their own.

In the case of the planning review of the greenbelt, the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges moraine, the Wynne Liberals could have benefited from listening to the some 3,000 people who took time to attend those review meetings and air their concerns. Many organizations took the time and effort to put together comprehensive proposals for change to bring consistency to the three plans while protecting our natural heritage, and to ensure the long-term viability of agriculture in the protected areas.

Now, I do recall the minister coming up to Kitchener-Waterloo and Guelph as well. I know that both were fairly well attended, especially the one in Kitchener-Waterloo. I think that they boasted of the fact that they had more than the folks over in Guelph, and that's good. It seems, though, that all the time and effort goes for naught when this Wynne Liberal government introduces legislation to make changes to the Planning Act before the work and input is even reviewed. As our critic, who just arrived here moments ago, noted Tuesday, we're disappointed that the government is making partial changes without taking the time to get it right and without waiting for the results of the review to develop a comprehensive plan.

All that said, Speaker, the reality is that we do have these proposed partial changes in front of us that require our review today, changes that run the gamut from pro-

viding more stability for municipal planning documents and increased municipal accountability, and strengthening the protection of provincial interests, to encouraging more upfront planning and providing enhanced tools at the local level. The bill also proposes to:

- enhance the Ontario Municipal Board's obligation to consider citizen input when making decisions;

- extend municipal official plan update cycles from five years to 10 years, after a new, comprehensive official plan;

- provide the province with documents earlier to review municipal official plans and official plan amendments, when those documents are not exempt from provincial approval;

- modify the maximum alternative parkland dedication rate when giving cash in lieu;

- require municipalities to develop parks plans if they wish to establish the alternative parkland dedication rate and to work with school boards in developing such plans.

Certainly it's a whole list of changes, and a list that may have been more comprehensive and effective if only government had waited to listen first before they actually moved.

But of course we know that the changes to the Planning Act are only half the picture here, as Bill 73 also proposes to bring significant change to the Development Charges Act, 1997. As part of the proposed Bill 73, the government is proposing reforms that would:

- enhance funding for municipal transit systems;

- enhance transparency and accountability regarding payment of development charges and additional fees;

- identify any services which are ineligible for collection of development charges through regulation;

- require municipalities to examine the application of varying development charges within different areas of a municipality; and

- enhance municipal development charges reporting requirements.

As we all know, development charges have always been a delicate balance between encouraging economic activity and ensuring that municipalities have the funds needed to provide services for the added growth. The fact is that while we support funding transit, we have a number of concerns that this act may allow development charges to be increased so much that it slows economic growth.

We've got a very vibrant home-building industry in the region of Waterloo and a strong organization that represents those home builders, the Waterloo Region Home Builders' Association. I've had the pleasure of attending many of their events. Many of the home-building stakeholder groups are very generous in our community, employing thousands of people and building high-quality, affordable homes for families to raise their family in the region of Waterloo.

I remember hearing some stories on how, years ago, development charges were relatively affordable. Now they're getting to the point that, as these costs continue to grow, it is a significant percentage of the overall cost of a

home. That cost, of course, is passed along to the homeowner. Families are already stretched thin as it is, as prices continue to go up, to have an affordable option to raise their family in an area that they want. Not all families can live in condominiums in the downtown core. They want to raise their children, perhaps, in the suburbs where there's a bit more space to have their kids play, go to some schools that they so choose.

We have to realize that these DC charges are a significant concern that goes along with raising development charges—concerns surrounding the fact that a proportion of a home's cost that goes towards government fees has risen from about 3% in the mid-1980s to almost 25%, or about \$100,000 for a \$400,000 home. Speaker, that is an awful, large increase.

One would have to ask if those services that families are funding through DC charges are in fact being put back into the community. Of course, we need our roads, our water infrastructure, our waste water infrastructure. In the south end of Kitchener, where I'm from, we are a small city in essence. I know families are constantly asking for some sort of facility that would have a swimming pool, skating rinks, and they have to drive what they see is a bit far to have to access stuff, and it's DC charges that assist the municipality in paying for these things.

We talk about our fair share of those being reinvested back into the community. Speaker, almost all development charges get passed on to homebuyers in the end, jacking up the cost of homes and making it even more difficult for the young family looking for their first home to ever be able to make that purchase.

This government often perpetuates the illusion that when governments increase fees, charges, taxes and levies, somehow the developer is going to absorb them. As we've seen in reality, that is just simply not the case, Speaker. Development charges become part of the cost of a home and are passed on to people purchasing new homes, condos or renting an apartment, and that cost is significant. In fact, in 2009, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. found that government-imposed charges, including development charges, represented up to 19% of the median price of a single-family new home.

The Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association reported that, for a \$440,000 home, over \$25,000 goes to development charges.

The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario commissioned a report called Alternatives to Development Charges for Growth-Related Capital Costs. They found that development charges are now \$30,000 to \$50,000 per single-family home in high-growth municipalities surrounding Toronto. By comparison, it found that development fees in Calgary and Edmonton are less than \$8,000 per unit. That is a significant difference: \$30,000 to \$50,000 per single-family home versus \$8,000 in Calgary and Edmonton, Alberta.

1000

This bill, Bill 73, would increase development charges and, therefore, the cost of housing in a number of ways. First, it would remove the 10% discount on transit costs.

It would allow development charges to be charged on planned future services instead of historical services. It would remove the list of items that are exempted from development charges from the act and allow the government to choose which to exempt. That means that new homeowners and businesses could now be paying development charges to pay for cultural or entertainment facilities, including museums, theatres and art galleries, or to fund a new city hall or a tourism facility such as a convention centre.

One of the items that was previously exempt was the provision of waste management services. The government already indicated that under the new regulations, municipalities will now be allowed to have development charges cover the cost of that. In fact, there have already been municipal requests to expand it further and allow development charges on all of the previously exempt items, including cultural, tourism and entertainment facilities.

Now, Speaker, I want to just go back slightly. We mentioned the fact that one of those items that was previously exempt was the provision of waste management services and that under the new regulations, municipalities will now be allowed to have those development charges cover the cost of that. In the region of Waterloo, there is a significant debate happening right now. In fact, our local councils are making a significant decision that would delay the pickup of garbage from every week to every other week, with a bag limit.

Some will argue that's a long time coming. Somebody who has a young family that generates a significant amount of waste from, say, babies' diapers I think is going to find it difficult for it to happen biweekly. That's not just me; I have heard from families in my area and seniors who are going to have a difficult time with this.

Of course, there is a significant cost savings to that, which we all have to be conscious of. I had an email just recently this week that regional government has grown substantially, and one thing that homeowners expect out of services like waste management or picking up the garbage is that they should be looking elsewhere first instead of always reducing the front-line services while continuing to perhaps not always look within first to do so. So now, under this new piece of legislation, DC charges are going to be allowed to include the provision of waste management services.

Interjection.

Mr. Michael Harris: Same thing: waste management, waste diversion.

Interjections.

Mr. Michael Harris: Look, that's something that I think is an appropriate question that we have to ask.

In fact, there have already been municipal requests to expand it further to allow development charges on all of the previously exempt items, including cultural, tourism and entertainment facilities.

I know we'll be seeing the guys across the way here talk about waste diversion and waste reduction. They brought a bill here last session, the Waste Reduction Act. They couldn't get it right. It was just a colossal failure.

Industry groups, stakeholders, even municipalities felt it was extremely flawed. We'll see what the new minister brings back shortly. It's an extremely important situation here in the province. Our waste diversion rate is a dismal failure in terms of its percentages. I know I asked the former minister, if he was a teacher, if 40% would be a fail or a pass. Of course, we all know it's a fail. We'll see where they go with that.

I understand why municipalities would want those additional development charges. Many of them are struggling to make ends meet and provide the infrastructure and services that residents want. Part of the problem is a provincial government that is more focused on blaming others than actually taking responsibility for the challenges that municipalities face. This year, spending in the provincial budget actually increased by \$2.4 billion, but the Ontario municipal partnership grants that municipalities depend on were being cut again.

Again, we do understand the needs of our municipalities to fund necessary transit improvements across their areas. Certainly, I can speak to the need in my area of Waterloo region.

The region of Waterloo submitted their amendments to this bill on March 24, 2015, which I would like to read into the record. But before I do, the request stems from the fact that the province of Ontario gave the region the shaft when it came to light rail transit funding. You see, Speaker, cities like Hamilton, Mississauga and Brampton got 100% funding for their LRT projects, and Waterloo region's ION got only one third, from the original commitment of two thirds.

Just last Friday, the member from Kitchener–Waterloo and I, as well as our local colleagues the members from Kitchener Centre and Cambridge, called on the government to ask for transit fairness. The Liberal government continues their carrot-and-stick approach, promising yet never quite delivering on transit commitments to Waterloo region.

From two-thirds funding for LRT to all-day, two-way GO, the truth has become more obvious with each subsequent transit announcement elsewhere in the province that when it comes to funding Kitchener–Waterloo's transit pledge, the cupboard is bare. Again, while other municipalities get the gold mine, we get the shaft. With only one-third provincial support while other municipalities get full funding, the region's submissions to amend Bill 73 stem from the province's unfair treatment.

On January 7, 2014, Waterloo region council recommended that the province make changes to the DCA to support the region's transition to a higher-order light rail transit system, specifically by allowing the use of a 10-year, forward-looking level of service as the baseline for calculating development charges for transit and by eliminating the 10% mandatory discount on development charges to pay for transit infrastructure. Council did pass additional recommendations regarding changes to the DCA consistent with the principle that growth pays for growth. I'll get into those to finish up my questions and comments.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands recessed until 10:30 a.m.

The House recessed from 1007 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mario Sergio: I'm delighted to let you know that a new Ferrari has arrived. Alessandro Sebastiano Ferrari can't be here. He would have loved to be here, but he doesn't have a driver's licence yet. Therefore, we'd like to congratulate papa Gianluca, my senior policy adviser, and mama Daiana on the new Ferrari arrival. We want to wish them happiness, joy, congratulations and best wishes.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Speaker, I'd like to welcome someone from your neck of the woods. Alex Felsky is in the gallery—she is a trustee with the Grand Erie District School Board—and Laura Duguid.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I'd like to welcome to Queen's Park two political science majors from Wilfrid Laurier University, and Oakville residents, Jonathan Ricci and Matt McLean.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I would like to introduce a good friend of mine from North Bay, Terri MacDougall. She's the mother of today's page captain Sheila MacDougall.

Mr. Paul Miller: I'd like to introduce Dorothy McKane, the mother of Martin McKane, my LA. Dorothy is visiting us from Ireland.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Please help me welcome, in the west members' gallery, my intern, Farnaz Yaqubian. Farnaz and her family live in the great riding of Oak Ridges–Markham and she will be entering her third year at Wilfrid Laurier in the fall.

M. Gilles Bisson: J'aimerais introduire Alexandre Fortier, qui est ici avec nous cette semaine de Timmins. Il est un étudiant coop de l'école Renaissance qui est ici pour regarder notre Parlement en action.

Mr. Chris Ballard: I would like to introduce the executive of the Ontario Provincial Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada, here in the east members' gallery: Betty Colaneri, Pauline Krupa, Marlene Pavletic, Linda Squarzolo and Rosanne Sogan. Welcome.

Miss Monique Taylor: I have some wonderful guests with me today. I have one of my constituency assistants, Christine DiGiantomasso; I have her niece Lyndsay Freeman; and a very, very special welcome to my father, Mike Taylor.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Government and Consumer Services.

Hon. David Orzietti: You got it, Speaker. Thank you very much.

I want to recognize our page from Sault Ste. Marie, Katie Woods, who is page captain today. With us in the east gallery are her mother, Jennifer Woods; her sister Rachel Woods; and her aunt Christine Grasy, as well as my wife, Jane, and my daughter, Olivia, who are here today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I would like my colleagues to join me in welcoming an intern who is working in my office this summer, Domenic Bitondo. Welcome, Domenic.

Mr. Granville Anderson: I have the pleasure of welcoming a young man who helped me immensely in my campaign, Adam Jeronimo. I would also like to welcome my executive assistant, Mr. Justin MacLean, and also from my office, Ian McMillan. Welcome.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm really pleased to welcome some of my family members here today. My father, Alan French, is in the members' gallery, and it's his birthday today. Happy birthday.

Sitting beside him is my grandmother Katharine Ross, who just celebrated a birthday. She is 94 years young.

It's their first time to the Legislature.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I would like to introduce, in the members' gallery, Stephen Heckbert, father of our page captain Robert, who is also one of my constituents in the great riding of Ottawa-Orléans. Welcome, Stephen.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I'd like to introduce a former member of the Legislative Assembly, Jean-Marc Lalonde, who is here with us today in the members' gallery. Welcome, Jean-Marc.

Mr. Norm Miller: I am pleased to welcome here today members of the Otter Lake Christian School from Seguin township in Parry Sound district. I assured them that everyone would be on their best behaviour today. Welcome.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I want to also welcome my good friends from the Ontario Provincial Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada, doing wonderful, dedicated work.

I also have, in the gallery, a member of my constituency office staff who is here today from Thunder Bay, Stephen Margarit. Welcome, Stephen.

Mr. Arthur Potts: It's a great pleasure to introduce a fantastic consultant who is not Howard Brown: Craig Brockwell is in the members' west gallery. I didn't recognize him with his sunglasses on. Welcome.

Mr. Chris Ballard: Also attending today are executives from the Newmarket Seniors' Meeting Place here to meet with us: Maureen Huismans, Anne McGhee and Patricia Berry.

Hon. Bill Mauro: Once again, welcome our page captain from Thunder Bay—Atikokan, Emma Schubert, and her mother, Andrea. They're joined here today, for the first time, by her aunt Karen Ferris. Welcome to the Legislature.

Mr. Grant Crack: Il me fait un grand plaisir de souhaiter la bienvenue au maire de Clarence-Rockland, M. Guy Desjardins, et aussi à la directrice générale, Helen Collier.

And I know that I'm not allowed to, but I'm going to introduce the councillor for Clarence-Rockland, Monsieur Jean-Marc Lalonde.

Bienvenue à Queen's Park.

M. Bob Delaney: C'est avec plaisir que je dis « welcome back » à mon ami et l'ancien instructeur en chef pour l'équipe de hockey Legiskaters, notre ami M. Jean-Marc Lalonde.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I think we've created the Howard Brown effect.

As is the tradition of the Speaker—at least, from my understanding, done many, many times—in the members' gallery, we have with us the former member from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell in the 37th, 38th and 39th Parliaments, Monsieur Jean-Marc Lalonde.

I also understand that there is a very large number of family members in the gallery today—just saying.

It is now time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO BUDGET

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is for the Premier. After the budget bill was rammed through committee and after it passed yesterday, it gave me a chance to reflect. It gave me a chance to reflect on its effect on the average Ontarian. Over and over again, I thought about what it will cost them.

Premier, with the payroll pension tax, the aviation tax, the beer tax, the new income tax rate and the skyrocketing hydro rates all included in the budget, will you tell Ontarians how much the budget will cost?

1040

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What the member opposite could have been reflecting on is the investments that will be made because of the budget bill that has been passed: \$31 billion for Moving Ontario Forward projects, transportation infrastructure across this province and a plan for a \$130-billion investment over 10 years. That's roads and bridges and transit in all parts of this province that will allow communities to thrive.

He might have reflected on the \$20 million for three years for the Experience Ontario program that's going to help graduating high school students to better identify their future goals by having a work experience opportunity. He might have thought about the \$250 million over the next two years for a renewed Ontario's Youth Jobs Strategy that has already seen tens of thousands of young people in placements that have led to jobs. He might have thought about those things.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jim Wilson: Again to the Premier: It's more than the costs that we know now, it's the hidden costs too. Ten thousand Ontarians reached out to the Ombudsman seeking help for hydro billing errors. The Auditor General made it public that the government wasted some \$2 billion on smart meters. The government's response? Independent oversight at Hydro One has ended. Hydro One raided the bank accounts of Ontarians and these mistakes cost Ontarians \$83 million, all of which was made public because of independent oversight.

Premier, can you explain the cost of secrecy and losing oversight at Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: To just follow up on the theme of the budget, the member opposite might have thought about the rate increases of 1% for social assistance recipients. He might have thought about the modernized student assistance program that's going to index the maximum aid to inflation; Ontario will be the first province to do that and that will help our post-secondary students. He might have thought about the \$40 million that we're putting into technology in classrooms for students in kindergarten through grade 12. Those are all aspects of the budget.

The member opposite knows that the oversight of Hydro One will be analogous to the oversight of other publicly held companies. He knows that's the case. He knows there are mechanisms in place already. He knows there will be a special ombudsman for Hydro One. He knows that those oversights already exist.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Again to the Premier: Furthermore, the cost doesn't stop with the Hydro One fiasco. Despite some of Ontario's largest employers outlining the costs it will have to Ontario businesses and jobs, the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan was rammed through with the budget bill. Large or small, the majority of businesses will be negatively impacted by the ORPP. We asked the government to walk away, hit pause and rethink this job-killing plan, but to no avail.

Premier, how many jobs will the ORPP cost Ontario when businesses fire employees rather than pay this new payroll tax?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Let me ask the member opposite what the cost would be to allow a generation or two generations of people—young people now—to age and retire and not have adequate retirement security.

It is the responsibility of government to think beyond the next three years or the next four years. We know, he knows, people across the country know, the federal government even knows that people in their 20s and 30s and 40s cannot put enough aside in order to assure a secure retirement. They know that. So if we all know that, is it not our responsibility to do something about that? Because the cost of not doing anything means that we have seniors retiring into insecurity.

SMART METERS

Mr. John Yakabuski: My question is to the Minister of Energy. This morning we learned that a so-called smart meter caught fire and exploded in Collingwood. For months you've been assuring the public that the smart meters in Ontario were not like the ones in Saskatchewan, that ours wouldn't catch fire and that only a few thousand would have to be replaced as a preventive measure in Sarnia-Lambton. Like so many things you've said on the energy file, your talking points, like your smart meters, have flamed out.

Minister, if a smart meter in Collingwood could catch fire and explode despite your assurances, how do we know there are not tens of thousands more just like it in the province of Ontario, waiting to go off?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Yes, there was a fire in one of our 4.8 million smart meters in the last several days. The ESA, the Electrical Safety Authority, is investigating that. There is no indication yet whether it was the meter, the installation or any other cause. We are awaiting the results of that investigation. When we have the results of that investigation, we'll be able to respond.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Well, meter or installation, whatever the problem is, I don't think that's much of an assurance, Minister.

We know you refuse to admit that your smart meter tax machine program has been a disaster from the start, partly due to your abysmal administration of the rollout. Since the Auditor General's report last December, the public understands that your smart meter fiasco will cost energy consumers double what you claimed it would. Smart meters haven't cut consumption at peak times, and often they don't even relay their information back to the central data centre. Now we learn that these devices may catch fire without warning and burn a ratepayer's house down.

Minister, there are over a million of these so-called meters in Ontario because of you. What is your plan of action today? How much more will this add to your \$2-billion smart meter boondoggle?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, the member should know that there are 4.8 million, not a million smart meters in the province of Ontario.

The Environmental Commissioner of Ontario says of smart meters, "They are necessary—absolutely necessary for the proper functioning and future functioning of the distribution system for electricity. Smart grid technologies have the potential to improve reliability, reduce system costs, empower customers and lower the environmental impact of the electricity we use."

There are many other endorsements, but Mr. Speaker, if you talk to the LDCs, the electricity utilities, including the one that serves his community, they will say smart meters are a smart thing to do.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Well, it's great that the minister is smart enough to count them. Maybe he could figure out how to make them work.

Minister, this is precisely the sort of scandal that the Auditor General needs to investigate, but because of your shameful budget passing, she no longer has the ability to do so. Every person who owns a smart meter is now worried that theirs could catch on fire. Families do not trust your government to provide them with the peace of mind that they need on this. This incident proves that your government simply can't be trusted on the issue.

Minister, will you commit to allowing the Auditor General and the Ombudsman to continue to have over-

sight on Hydro One, even though you took it away with the passing of the budget?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Minister.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, the member knows that we have retained former Auditor General of Canada Denis Desautels to oversee the implementation of an ombudsman at Hydro One. His mandate is to ensure that the ombudsman will be transparent and accountable. That is moving forward.

Hydro One, as a TSX company, a stock-trading company, will have tremendous oversight. The Securities Act provides oversight, accountability and audited statements for every nature of the operations of a public company. They will be accountable.

Mr. Speaker, we are in the process of restructuring the board of Hydro One. The chair of Hydro One is also in the process of selecting a CEO for Hydro One, moving forward. It's the right thing to do.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: To the Premier, Speaker: The Premier is pushing ahead with her scheme to sell Hydro One. My question is, what's next?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, what's next are those investments in infrastructure that are being driven by the fact that we've found the revenue to make those investments. That's the whole point of this.

I have said it over and over again in this House: I understand that this is a difficult decision. I understood, when we said that we were going to review our assets, that that was a difficult thing to do. But it is motivated by our understanding, our knowledge, that if we do not invest in the roads and bridges and transit that are needed in this province, Mr. Speaker, then we will rob future generations of economic prosperity that is necessary. It's as simple as that. We know we can thrive. We know that we can compete, but we can't do that without making these investments, and that's why we're making them.

1050

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Yesterday, the Minister of Finance was asked what the next thing on the auction block was going to be. He said, "Right now there is no determination." Now, I know the Premier says that she has been clear about her plan to sell off assets. Will the Premier make clear, then, exactly what the Minister of Finance was referring to yesterday? What is the next asset that is up for sale?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'll let the Minister of Finance speak to the details in the supplementary, but what we are doing right now is we are working on making the investments in the roads, bridges and transit infrastructure that we know is necessary.

The leader of the third party, when she talks about assets, has no solution for the investments in infrastructure. She wants to talk in isolation about a particular

ideological position that is underpinned by a total lack of confidence in anything that the private sector does, which I think is an interesting position for a responsible politician to take.

The fact is, government has to work with the private sector. It is absolutely essential that we work with all sectors in the community—with labour, with the private sector—to make sure that we get public policy right. This is public policy that is going to build assets for the people of Ontario for this generation—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier says she was clear in her budget and in her platform about her plan for asset sales. Then she denied she was selling assets. Now she's denying that she ever even made that denial and she won't say whether there are more sell-offs in the works.

It's getting pretty ridiculous. Why doesn't this Premier stand in her place, take this opportunity to be upfront with the people of Ontario and tell them exactly what is next on the auction block?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: It was very clear on page 73 in terms of what it is that we are doing. I did respond and I did actually follow up in determining what some of those properties would be. I listed them in the budget. We talked about the Seaton and Lakeview lands. We talked about OPG's head office. We talked about a number of—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Charles Sousa: We talked about a number of properties that were unproductive that we wanted to ensure that we maximize by reinvesting them into infrastructure, into public transit, into things that will generate greater returns to the people of Ontario. It's clearly laid out. Read it if you wish.

We're taking care of business, and we'll continue to help the people of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): New question. The leader of the third party.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, I'd advise you to lock up the mace; that might be next.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is for the Premier. The Premier kept Ontarians in the dark about her scheme to sell off Hydro One—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Please ask.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: She kept Ontarians in the dark about her scheme to sell off Hydro One, she kept her ministers in the dark about her scheme to sell off Hydro One and she kept her backbenchers in the dark about her

scheme to sell off Hydro One. This afternoon, this House is going to vote on whether or not to actually listen to Ontarians.

Will this Premier allow her MPP backbenchers a free vote on whether or not they should be listening to the people in their ridings and hold a referendum on the sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Let me say to the leader of the third party once again—and I will go through the statements we made. April 11, 2014: “The Ontario government has appointed a council to recommend ways to improve the efficiency and optimize the full value of Hydro One.” In our budget 2014: “The government will look at maximizing and unlocking value from assets it”—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The two-way conversation that’s going on is not helpful, and finger pointing doesn’t change my mind at all.

Carry on.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: —including real estate holdings, as well as crown corporations such as” OPG, Hydro One and the LCBO.

Page 257 of our budget 2014: “Exploring options to unlock the full value of a wide range of valuable provincial assets ... specifically the LCBO, Hydro One and” OPG.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton Mountain, come to order.

Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Why is this Premier more interested in hearing from a very small group of her friends, her very powerful friends, than she is from the people of Ontario, from Ontario families—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Deputy House leader.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: —in a referendum on the sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I went through the quotes of what we said we were going to do. They were very clear.

There was an election on June 12, 2014. That election was based on the statements that had been made by the various parties. Our statements were very clear about the fact that we were looking at unlocking the value of our assets. We hadn’t been explicit about what exactly that was going to mean, but we were clear enough that the leader of the third party said—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We were clear enough that even the leader of the third party could understand. She said, “The budget says in black and white that the government is looking at the sale of assets, ‘including ... crown corporations, such as Ontario Power Generation’”—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I have all kinds of rights, and asking the House to come to order is one of them.

Premier, finish please. You have one wrap-up sentence.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Just to say that that was the budget we campaigned on. We had the election, and we are moving ahead to implement that plan.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Well, I can tell you that the leader of the third party knows exactly what the Liberals are up to, which is why we didn’t support their budget in the first place—because we knew that this Premier was not being honest and upfront with the people of Ontario. That’s what we saw in that budget.

Ontario families actually own Hydro One. They deserve a say on the Premier’s plan to sell off Hydro One. In fact, the backbenchers actually deserve an ability to cast a free vote—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Trinity–Spadina.

I’m going to ask the leader to withdraw.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I’ll withdraw, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I will now ask you to finish putting your question.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The bottom line is, the Liberals pulled a real sneaky fast one on the people of Ontario, and what we want to see—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That’s not acceptable. Please withdraw.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I withdraw, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Please finish.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The people of this province, whether the Liberals like it or not, own Hydro One. It is their right to decide whether or not it gets sold off. Will she hold a referendum and give them their voice?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

1100

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, we’re on the cusp of royal assent of budget 2015, Building Ontario Up. It is one of the most progressive budgets to date, investing critical investments for future generations of our province while enhancing and preserving the quality of life of people all across Ontario. We’re also making a very prudent fiscal plan to balance while so doing. But it’s possible because of the vision and the integrity of the Premier of this province. We stand behind Premier Kathleen Wynne for all that she has done. Thank you for your support.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order, please.

New question.

TEACHERS’ LABOUR DISPUTES

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I’ll try to tone it down a bit here, Mr. Speaker.

My question today is to the Minister of Education.

Minister, no doubt you are happy to see this session come to an end. It ends with our education system in complete turmoil. We know that almost non-stop bargaining and negotiations will have to occur to avoid turmoil on September 8. I've heard you say that a lot of bargaining can take place in three months. We have 96 days left until the new school year.

Can you outline to the House your plans, as minister, to avoid turmoil on September 8?

Hon. Liz Sandals: That's very simple. We will be at the bargaining table, we will be negotiating, we will be working with the unions, we will be working with the school boards: That's the plan. We are quite willing to spend the summer negotiating. Only through negotiations will we actually be able to arrive at a collective agreement.

When we introduced and passed Bill 122, we understood that we need everybody involved in this discussion at the table. We understood that we need the government as the funder. We understood that we need to restore collective bargaining to the unions. We understood that the school boards have a role because they're the employers, and that all three of those parties—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Minister, I must say I have enjoyed being your critic this past session or two. Since July of last year, I've actually gained a lot of new friends as education stakeholders. Like you, I have a passionate interest in the education and training of the two million students here in Ontario.

Minister, we have no agreements in place—with none of the educators of the 72 boards in Ontario as of now, and it started last fall. My question, as your critic, your friend and your colleague here in the Legislature, is this: Will your office send me a daily update on the process, the bargaining that's taking place throughout the summer months so that I can pass it on to my leader, Patrick Brown, and the rest of our PC caucus?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I don't recall writing into the legislation a clause that said, "Update your critic daily on what's happening at the bargaining table." In fact, I think I've said repeatedly that the only way—

Interjections.

Hon. Liz Sandals: And this is serious—the only way we're actually going to get agreements is if we bargain at the bargaining table. Bargaining through the critics, bargaining through the Legislature, bargaining through the media doesn't work. The only place that bargaining works is at the bargaining table, and that is where we intend to be.

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Ever since the Premier blindsided Ontarians with her plan to sell off Hydro One—and the question is to you, Premier—the Premier has claimed that the Ontario Energy Board would protect Ontarians from

a privatized Hydro One and its desire for much higher rates. Then we learned she's stacking the OEB with energy industry insiders. Then we learned she's trying to get rid of consumer intervenors at the OEB hearings. And the other day her government tabled a bill that would allow the government to bypass the OEB altogether whenever it wants to push through costly and risky megaprojects that consumers will pay for.

Why is the Premier weakening consumer protections at the Ontario Energy Board?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, that accusation is so sweeping, so incorrect, it's very, very difficult to answer. I'll answer that by saying that he already knows that the Ontario Energy Board has been reducing and cutting back requests for increases in rates. He already knows that we've introduced legislation that—

Mr. Paul Miller: Not anymore.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Yes—gives us the authority to initiate transmission projects, which he calls a project that we should not have the authority to do. We've had people say that we're going to lose authority over the system because of Hydro One. Now he's telling us that we ought not to have the power to initiate transmission projects.

Mr. Speaker, he's all over the map, he's inconsistent and he's repeated again for the third time the conflict-of-interest issue at the Ontario Energy Board, and he's dead wrong.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I can't see why having an evidence-based process for making a decision is a problem; nonetheless, that's the way the government sees it.

Under the current law, the Ontario Energy Board must weigh the costs and benefits of a transmission project to see if it's in the public interest, but the government's new bill would bypass this open review process, allowing the government to ram through megaprojects based on politics, not on evidence.

Why does the Premier need yet another way to put her own political interests ahead of the interests of consumers and Ontario families?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The proposed enhancements would provide—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton Mountain—second time.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: These improvements would provide cabinet with the clear authority to identify priority transmission projects and eliminate the requirement—eliminate the requirement—for the OEB to spend further time on basic principle of need. All other elements of the OEB's existing approval processes, including reviewing costs, prudence and allocation, would remain in place,

except as we have further expanded their authority in the legislation that we've introduced.

AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

Ms. Daiene Vernile: My question is to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Minister, the week of June 1 to 7, Ontario is celebrating Local Food Week, giving us the opportunity to thank our farmers for the safe, high-quality and tasty food that they've produced.

By buying local food, Ontarians not only have access to food that's nutritious, delicious and environmentally friendly, they're also supporting local farmers and the local economy.

Minister, I want to tell you that I'm personally looking forward to the first crops being produced by Fertile Ground in Waterloo region—that is a farm-share program to which my family belongs.

Mr. Speaker, could the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs please update the House on Local Food Week?

Hon. Jeff Leal: I want to thank the hard-working member from Kitchener Centre for that wonderful question this morning. We do know the Kitchener area is the home of the famous market in Elmira.

We're supporting our local food as part of our government's plan to grow the economy, create jobs and foster a strong and vibrant agri-food sector.

Some time ago, we introduced the Local Food Act, which was a product of all parties in this Legislature. I always recognize the work that was done by the honourable gentleman from Sarnia.

As part of Local Food Week, we were proud to announce that VG Meats will receive up to \$948,025 through the Local Food Fund, to help bring Ontario beef to more than 25 Longo's grocery stores right across Ontario, one being in the wonderful riding of Vaughan. Today we're holding our eighth annual Queen's Park farmers' market on the front lawn after question period, and we'll be releasing our first-ever Local Food Report, detailing the progress we've made and our goals and targets established by the Local Food Fund—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Supplementary?

1110

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Thank you to the minister for his answer. Minister, I invite you to come to Kitchener Centre to visit our famous farmers' market soon.

Minister, it is great to hear that the Ontario government is continuing to make these key investments in local food projects across Ontario. We all know that farmers do feed cities, and our government must continue to support farmers, to build Ontario up. Farmers work hard all year round to bring food to our tables, and we know that Ontario consumers appreciate fresh, local foods—I know I do.

In 2013, the Premier challenged the agri-food sector to double its annual growth rate to create 120,000 new jobs

by the year 2020. Could the minister please inform this House, during Local Food Week, on the local food strategy to contribute to the Premier's agri-food challenge?

Hon. Jeff Leal: I want to thank the member for Kitchener Centre for her supplementary.

I do take the opportunity to visit farmers' markets right across the province of Ontario, whether I'm in Elmira, Ontario, or Cobourg, Ontario, or Collingwood, Ontario, or communities right across the province. There's no better experience than to visit a farmers' market.

Since the Premier issued the growth challenge to our sector last year, we have created 17,000 new jobs in the agri-food sector in Ontario, which has led to \$1.1 billion in new exports. This is all about making our investments in the agri-food sector.

Just last week I had the opportunity to be with my good friend the member from Wellington—Halton Hills to announce our great investment in the new Elora dairy research station, something that will put Ontario on the market internationally when it comes to the dairy sector. This new state-of-the-art facility will help develop—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

New question.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Jack MacLaren: My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Minister, your management of our health care system is a failure. You are cutting physiotherapy for seniors. You are cutting home care for people who want to be at home. You are cutting funding to hospitals, and nurses are being laid off. And now you are cutting fees for services paid to doctors.

Our doctors are the foundation of our health care system. They are not your employees; they are your partners—your partners in health care delivery.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: You are not treating them with the respect that they are due. You are not dealing with them responsibly. You are not negotiating in good faith.

Minister, will you talk to our doctors in the mutually respectful manner they deserve? The integrity of our health care system is at stake.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: It's partly because we are increasing our investments into community and home care—it's partly because we are increasing our investments and hiring more nurses and making sure that we're investing in those aspects of health care that truly do support our seniors and other vulnerables in society—that we've asked our doctors to work with us in this difficult and challenging fiscal time, to actually pause in terms of their remuneration. That's all we're talking about here. We're talking about the compensation the government provides to our doctors.

After a year of negotiations with the OMA, we brought in an umpire. We brought in retired Justice Warren Winkler to bring the two parties together to try

and reach an agreement. At the end of the day, we were unable to do that. Judge Winkler implored the OMA to accept our offer; they didn't. But we are going ahead and implementing precisely what Winkler had recommended.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Minister, there are 28,000 doctors in Ontario, who treat 320,000 patients every day of the year. Our population grows by 140,000 people every year, and our aging, high-needs population is also growing rapidly every year. The demand for medicare in Ontario grows by 2.7% every year, and yet government has committed to fund only 1.25%, or less than half, of that growth.

Dr. Stephen Grodinsky, a pediatrician in my riding, tells me that two pediatricians are retiring in Ottawa and there are no new doctors to replace them. We need more doctors, and your response is to cut fees for services paid to doctors. That is not going to work. This is a major disincentive for doctors to practise in Ontario.

Minister, think of the 320,000 patients per day. They need our doctors. Will you get back to the bargaining table and do what is right?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Mr. Speaker, the fact is that we actually have more than 5,000 more physicians than existed in Ontario when we came into office in 2003.

Our doctors are precious to the health care system in this province. I'm a family physician and a public health expert myself, and a member of the OMA.

I had the privilege, just two days ago, of sitting down with Dr. Michael Toth, who is a family doctor from southwestern Ontario, the new president of the OMA. We had a very positive and engaging discussion. I know my ministry is actually sitting today, again, with the OMA, as part of the Physician Services Committee to look at ways that we can move forward and come back to negotiations and discussions.

There are many, many important issues that we depend on our doctors in Ontario to help us work through. They are important partners. They are a big part of the foundation of health care in this province. I look forward to continuing to strengthen that relationship and working with them.

CLASS SIZE

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: My question is to the Premier. Speaker, the Minister of Education has finally admitted that class size caps are on the table. The minister has also acknowledged that the government is a party at the table. But it's alarming that the minister stubbornly refuses, day after day, to commit to keeping current class size caps under any deal she signs.

There's frankly no excuse for not stepping up and protecting the small class sizes and one-on-one time that families expect. Those small class sizes are at the heart of what quality education means—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Deputy House leader, a second time.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: —and our kids deserve nothing less. If the Liberal government refuses to step up and do their job for the families of this province, they'll be forcing all of our students into even larger classes this September and forcing our kids to pay the price in overcrowded classrooms.

Will the Premier finally do the right thing? Will she do what her minister refuses to do? Will the Premier guarantee to families and kids today, right here, right now, that current class size caps will be protected because that's the right thing to do for schools in Ontario?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know the Minister of Education is going to want to comment on the supplementary, but I just really need to remark that this is a party that apparently is trying to find its way back to its voice and believes in collective bargaining, Mr. Speaker. I would just remind this party that part of that voice they're trying to recapture is a belief in the relationship with labour. That means collective bargaining. As the minister has said over and over and over again, the only place we're going to find a deal—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: —the only place we're going to get a deal is at the table. So I would expect that of all the parties in this House, the leader of the third party would support a collective bargaining process. That's what we're engaged in and that's what we're going to let run its course.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I'd like to remind the Premier that some of these staff have been without a contract for nine months. You should try coming to the table rather than legislating them back to work.

Back to the Premier: The Liberal record on education is abysmal at best. Not only have the Premier and government thrown our schools into chaos because of more than a decade of chronic underfunding, they have also shown zero respect for education workers, their professionalism or their work environment.

They brag about frozen funding. They brag about cutting \$250 million from education. They refuse to admit that special education funding has been cut in many schools, including \$6 million in Toronto alone. With one hand they commit to community hubs, and with the other they have closed, or want to close, more than 125 neighbourhood schools. Now, after all that, they want to go even further to jeopardize small class sizes and one-on-one time our children deserve.

Will the Premier stop the chaos her government has caused to our children's education by committing to protecting small class sizes today and getting—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: To the Minister of Education.

1120

Hon. Liz Sandals: You know, I'm really not going to take a lecture here from the party whose only education

platform in the 2014 election was, "Let's take \$600 million out of the spending on education and health care," and whose position just last week was, "Let the teachers go back again," 10 days after we ended one strike because it was deemed to be unlawful. They voted for the teachers to go back out on strike again instead of getting kids back in the classroom. That's their record in education.

What I would say is the same thing I said to my critic for the official opposition—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Windsor West, second time.

Answer.

Hon. Liz Sandals: The critic for the third party is not part of the negotiating process. I'm not negotiating with her.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr. Chris Ballard: My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. It's imperative that students across Ontario have access to high-quality post-secondary education. That's why last year, our government issued an open call for proposals for post-secondary institutions to expand capacity in underserved areas as part of Ontario's Major Capacity Expansion Policy Framework.

Minister, I understand that a panel evaluated 13 proposals based on a number of clearly outlined criteria, including their ability to increase spaces in underserved areas and offer a broad range of innovative, high-demand programs. Many of my constituents in Newmarket–Aurora were delighted to hear that the province is supporting a new York University Markham Centre campus in partnership with Seneca College to the south of my riding.

Can you please inform the members of the House of how our government is making post-secondary education more accessible in York region through Ontario's Major Capacity Expansion Policy Framework?

Hon. Reza Moridi: I want to thank the member from Newmarket–Aurora for that very timely question.

A couple of weeks ago, I was pleased to be joined by several of my colleagues to announce our support for the first-ever university campus in York region. After an open and transparent selection process, York University's proposal was most clearly aligned with the criteria set forward by the evaluation panel set up by my minister.

The new campus will offer programs that incorporate experiential learning with an academic focus on business, the arts and social sciences. The campus received great support from the city of Markham, from York region and also from employers. The campus will be close to local transit options and other facilities, such as sports fields, the YMCA and the Atos Markham Pan Am/Parapan Am Centre.

I want to congratulate York University, and also I want to thank all the institutions—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Chris Ballard: Thank you to the minister for that answer. It's reassuring to know that our government is committed to helping more students pursue post-secondary education by putting the right spaces in the right places.

For many municipalities, having a post-secondary institution is important for economic and regional development. At the same time, it's absolutely necessary that our government ensures Ontario taxpayer dollars are being invested in areas where post-secondary education and training are most needed.

York region is just one Ontario area that is experiencing significant growth of college- and university-age students. I understand that our government will be issuing a second call for proposals in spring 2016 for another expansion project to serve local demand in Peel and Halton regions.

Minister, can you please inform the members of the House more about this second call for proposals in Peel and Halton regions?

Hon. Reza Moridi: I want to thank the member again for that question.

Mr. Speaker, the member is absolutely right: It's imperative that Ontario's tax dollars are invested in areas where the demand for an undergraduate degree education will be strong and gaps in access are expected. That's why I was also pleased to announce that our government will be issuing a second call for proposals in spring 2016 for another campus to serve the local needs in Peel and Halton regions. Currently, the combined 18- to 24-year-old population in Halton and Peel region is about 200,000. Despite such a large university-age population, these regions only have one university campus, with 10,000 undergraduate full-time students.

Our government will continue to make post-secondary education more accessible to our young people to make sure that our people will get the best education they can ever receive.

ABORIGINAL LAND DISPUTE

Mr. Toby Barrett: To the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Since November of last year, native militants have shut down construction of the provincial Highway 3 bridge at Cayuga, a \$20-million project just down the Grand River from Caledonia. The Haudenosaunee Development Institute and the Six Nations Men's Fire activists have forced construction workers off the bridge. Now, we've been waiting over six months to replace a deteriorating, 1924 steel truss bridge.

Minister, patience is wearing thin. When will your government restore peace, order and construction workers on the Cayuga bridge?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Once again I remind the member that when it comes to matters of policing operations, that is within the jurisdiction of the Ontario Provincial Police, a very highly regarded professional organization that

does excellent work across the province. I think it would be highly inappropriate for any member of this House, especially a member of government, to be speaking about police operations and decisions that they make.

We support the work that our Ontario Provincial Police do, especially the work they do in conjunction with our First Nations to ensure that we are working in a respectful and healthy relationship. I urge the members to do the same.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Toby Barrett: This Cayuga bridge shutdown requires urgent action. After years of delay, constant repair, load limits and lengthy detours, the bridge is not safe for heavy trucks or oversized farm machinery.

Haldimand county has no authority to force militants off the bridge when they've threatened construction workers. The Ministry of Transportation has had no success, in spite of seven years of negotiation and in spite of conducting lengthy environmental and archaeological reviews demanded by the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the same group that you have permitted to occupy Douglas Creek Estates in Caledonia for more than nine years now.

This militant action continues on a provincial bridge, on a provincial highway, under a provincial contract. When will your provincial government step in and allow the safe opening of the Cayuga bridge?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Again, when it comes to issues around maintaining peace and order, we rely on our provincial police—the Ontario Provincial Police, as everyone knows. They make those determinations.

I think what we should be promoting is a more peaceful resolution of any dispute, as opposed to sowing seeds of discontent.

We very much appreciate and recognize the work that the OPP does with local communities in finding those resolutions. I wholeheartedly support them and will continue to work with the OPP and let them do the work they do so well in our communities across the province.

PAN AM GAMES

Mr. Paul Miller: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. The Pan Am Games kick off in a month. The CEO of the games committee has said that “this will be a summer you will never forget.” Unfortunately for us, this quote came from an article about traffic congestion.

In less than four weeks, Pan Am lanes will be blocked off on highways into, out of and through Toronto. At the Minister of Transportation's—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock.

Minister of Energy.

Please ask.

Mr. Paul Miller: At the Minister of Transportation's technical briefings, a rosy picture was definitely painted: No real impacts on traffic, he said. But all this was contingent on his faith-based transportation plan that 20% of drivers will stay off the road.

Minister, what evidence do you have that this will work, number one? What metrics are you using? How will you measure your achievement against the 20% target: during or after the games?

1130

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I know that on this side of the House and right across the greater Toronto and Hamilton area—right across Ontario—there is a ton of excitement about the fact that the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games will be starting shortly.

That member should know, of course, that when we announced and provided the technical briefing with respect to the Pan Am/Parapan Am transportation plan, we did discuss a number of initiatives that are being brought forward and have already been brought forward.

For example, we're allowing spectators to use their games tickets to get onto public transit. We're expanding the high-occupancy-vehicle lane network temporarily for vehicles with three or more people, public transit, games fleet vehicles, emergency vehicles and taxis. We're providing accessible transportation options, including pre-booked accessible parking, public transit—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Answer.

Hon. Steven Del Duca:—specialized transit services. We're also providing information and planning tools to help people plan ahead and avoid any challenges they might have.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Paul Miller: It is clear that the government has been expecting massive congestion all along and has decided that it just can't be helped. They've decided that it is the price the public has to pay, although they've never asked. I call it their Ontario traffic premium plan.

The minister talks a lot about the evidence from London and Vancouver. Let me give you some numbers, Speaker, on what happened in London and Vancouver. London achieved only a 9% reduction in peak-hour p.m. traffic during the Olympics and during the Paralympics an abysmal 2%—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'll move to a warning.

Please finish.

Mr. Paul Miller: London achieved only a 9% reduction in peak-hour p.m. traffic during the Olympics, and during the Paralympics an abysmal 2%. They invested—this number is mind-boggling—billions in transit and still couldn't achieve 20%. We know the consequence of failing to reach a target: the Don Valley Parkway at a quarter of its normal speed, an hour and 15 minutes from the Gardiner to the 401, and similar numbers throughout the whole network.

Can the minister tell us what his plan B is to avoid traffic chaos—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Minister?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I thank the member for the follow-up question.

What I didn't get a chance to talk about in my original answer was that this coming Saturday, the Union Pearson

Express will launch and go into service in time for the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games, as this Premier and our government promised.

What I also didn't mention in my original answer was that the West Harbour GO station, formerly called the James Street North station, in that member's community, will be ready in time for the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games.

Interjection.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: That's right.

I will wrap up by reminding all members in this House that perhaps the member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek would know all of this if he had—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock.

New question.

SENIOR CITIZENS

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: My question is for the minister responsible for seniors affairs. I got to know many seniors while working as a nurse, and I know the importance of sustaining healthy, active and engaged older adults. I am proud of the dedication of the minister and this government to take action to help seniors live their best life.

This June, we celebrate the 31st annual Seniors' Month in Ontario. In my community of Cambridge and Waterloo region, Seniors' Month is an important occasion filled with many local events and activities that engage and celebrate the active and vibrant seniors in my community. For 31 years, we've honoured the many contributions that seniors have made to this province, and we recognize their spirit that continues to shine regardless of age.

Can the minister please share with us more details about Seniors' Month and how Ontario recognizes and celebrates seniors?

Hon. Mario Sergio: Thanks to the member for Cambridge for the question.

Indeed, we are happy to celebrate Ontario's 31st anniversary of Seniors' Month. Our theme this year is "Vibrant Seniors, Vibrant Communities," acknowledging the remarkable spirit of our seniors.

I was delighted to kick off Seniors' Month on June 1 at Ryerson University, where there is clearly a strong commitment and a strong community dedicated to continuous learning for seniors.

This Seniors' Month and beyond, I encourage everyone to reach out to the seniors in your lives and let them know we appreciate the work they have done for our home, Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you, Minister. I know how important it is to have activities that interest, engage and inspire the seniors in our communities, especially during Seniors' Month. I've had the pleasure to regularly host events to connect with them in order to learn and discuss the issues facing seniors. Next week, in

fact, I'll be visiting Heritage Meadows retirement home and listening to the seniors living in my riding of Cambridge.

It's essential to remember that the number of seniors in Ontario will double over the next two decades—including many in this House—and the work we do for them is becoming increasingly important. Speaker, could the minister please elaborate on the progress we're making as we mark the 31st annual Seniors' Month in Ontario?

Hon. Mario Sergio: Speaker, our action is strengthened by the work of hard-working local leaders like the member from Cambridge, who is so dedicated to seniors in her community.

Ontario's Action Plan for Seniors covers many issues that affect seniors and has had a very overwhelming positive response. For example, we launched the very successful—first year, first time—Seniors Community Grant Program, reaching out to some 46,000 seniors in the first year, and this year, Speaker, doubling the grant. Thanks to the Premier and Minister Sousa, we are reaching some 72,000-plus seniors in every corner of our province.

I'm proud to witness the strides we are making to help Ontario become the best place to age.

HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question is to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

Minister, I know from our personal conversations that you have a deep and abiding sense of the importance of heritage in the province of Ontario, and I commend you for that. You've also shown an interest in a particular piece of heritage in my riding, the Vineland schoolhouse.

As you know, the original schoolhouse was built in 1895. It's an extraordinary example of 19th-century architecture. It has been important in the community not just as a school, but a living, so to speak, example of Beamsville brickwork. There's an awful lot of history packed into that tiny schoolhouse.

Here's the problem: 120 years of history is going to come to an end on June 19. That's when the wrecking ball comes to town and knocks it down.

Minister, will you use your authority under the Ontario Heritage Act to intervene and save that schoolhouse?

Hon. Michael Coteau: I want to thank the member opposite for the question, but also for his advocacy on this issue. I know that over the last several weeks we've had many opportunities to talk about this specific schoolhouse. You know, 120 years: That's a lot of heritage, a lot of local heritage, and a beautiful example of the type of architecture that was developed 120 years ago.

In fact, I did receive many letters from Friends of Vineland Public School, and they have officially requested, as well, for provincial designation.

Mr. Speaker, the Ontario Heritage Act gives municipalities the tools they need to manage and protect the heritage assets in their communities. We've connected

with the local municipality, the township of Lincoln, and presented some options for them. I hope they make best use of those options to save this particular piece of infrastructure and history.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: I do want to say to the minister, I do appreciate the fact that you contacted the town of Lincoln and you gave them options. Unfortunately, the town of Lincoln decided not to pursue those options. Their concern is that they would be sued by the local school board because the previous council had issued the demolition permit.

The notion, and I think you would share this with me, of one publicly funded institution suing another publicly funded institution to get more money from the taxpayers to go to lawyers is preposterous. The schoolhouse gets knocked down all the same.

1140

So let me put this on the table because, as you know, come June 19, this piece of history is gone forever, and, as the expression goes, they don't make them like that anymore. Minister, will you use your authority as minister—I have been in that position. I know the minister and I know how much they care about heritage and I know your phone calls get returned. Would you contact both the school board and municipality and try to pull them together with heritage groups before June 19 to keep that living history alive?

Hon. Michael Coteau: As I was saying, we did contact the municipality of Lincoln and we have presented some options for them to assist in preventing any type of litigation against any of those publicly funded organizations. We believe that we've presented an option for them that would allow them to take local control and really develop a solution that would work for everyone.

At the ministry, this government, we are committed to preserving heritage here in the province of Ontario. In fact, the Premier has asked me to revisit culture and build a new framework for Ontario. I know heritage will be a big part of that discussion in the fall. I'm going to work with the Minister of Education. I will work with other ministries and the people of Ontario to look for better ways to preserve our history in the province of Ontario.

Again, I want to thank the member for his advocacy on this issue. We'll continue to work with both the school board and the municipality, if required.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. Major infrastructure projects like the Pan Am Games are generating massive volumes of contaminated soil. The Minister of the Environment and Climate Change does not track this soil and has no idea where it winds up. We do know that much of this contaminated soil has been dumped on prime farmland and protected lands in the greenbelt and the Oak Ridges moraine, with the property owners believing they were accepting clean soil. Last October, the

minister called this a top environmental and economic concern for Ontario, and promised action by the spring. Well, the spring session wraps up today, and nothing has been done. Why has the minister failed to take any action?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: In preamble, I just want to say one thing. I was the mayor who hosted the last Pan Am Games in Canada, in 1999. It's amazing to me how that party has found every opportunity to absolutely dis and degrade what is one of the most exciting events. It's the first time the Toronto area has had a major event. You don't know what you're in for, but we're about to have the most historic moments in our province's history, Mr. Speaker.

The waste guidelines that were put out last spring are being reviewed very actively, as is the development of the Waste Diversion Act. I look forward to reporting back to the House and working with my critic on that.

But it's a sad day, on the eve of what will be a historic summer in Ontario and Toronto and Hamilton's history, that that is the kind of lemon-sucking we get from the party opposite.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'd like to do this and then I'll come back to the member.

I have three quick comments before we move on.

ANNE STOKES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Just before we do move on to bills, I would like to draw the members' attention to the fact that our table Clerk Anne Stokes has announced that she's going to be retiring later this month. Therefore, this is her last day serving the table, and I hope that all members would join me in thanking Anne for a very long and successful career in public service and wish her the best in her years of retirement.

Applause.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): And to make sure that you understand I didn't miss it this time—and we're on a happy note—I have a sad note: This is the last day for our pages. But we do want to thank them for the wonderful work that they've done for us these last two weeks.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On a point of order, the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

Mr. Paul Miller: Thank you, Speaker. Just to correct the record, I'd like to inform the minister that my entire staff were at all technical briefings on the Pan Am Games. He's incorrect.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Renfrew has an extra chip in his pocket.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The minister, on a point of order.

Hon. Michael Coteau: It is my pleasure to welcome Monica Xu, Loreta Chan and Michelle Lu, who are part of the TO2015 Youth Summit joining us here in the Legislature today. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Just before we do our last, I do want to wish all of you a safe and healthy family time break, but also to reinforce what I've said time and time again: Thank you for the hard work that you do, even when the House is not sitting. I know you go back to your constituencies and work hard. Please be safe this summer. Enjoy yourselves and enjoy your families. Thank you.

I would also like to say to the staff here, to the clerks at the table and to all the staff here at the Legislature, thank you for a hard job done well. Thank you.

DEFERRED VOTES

INFRASTRUCTURE FOR JOBS
AND PROSPERITY ACT, 2015LOI DE 2015 SUR L'INFRASTRUCTURE
AU SERVICE DE L'EMPLOI
ET DE LA PROSPÉRITÉ

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015 / Projet de loi 6, Loi édictant la Loi de 2015 sur l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la prospérité.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1146 to 1151.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On June 3, 2015, Mr. Naqvi moved third reading of Bill 6.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Gates, Wayne	Miller, Norm
Anderson, Granville	Gélinas, France	Miller, Paul
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gravelle, Michael	Moridi, Reza
Arnott, Ted	Gretzky, Lisa	Munro, Julia
Bailey, Robert	Hardeman, Ernie	Murray, Glen R.
Baker, Yvan	Harris, Michael	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Balkissoon, Bas	Hatfield, Percy	Naqvi, Yasir
Ballard, Chris	Hoggarth, Ann	Nicholls, Rick
Barrett, Toby	Horwath, Andrea	Oraziotti, David
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoskins, Eric	Pettapiece, Randy
Bisson, Gilles	Hudak, Tim	Potts, Arthur
Bradley, James J.	Hunter, Mitzie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chan, Michael	Jaczek, Helena	Rinaldi, Lou
Chiarelli, Bob	Kiwala, Sophie	Sandals, Liz
Clark, Steve	Kwinter, Monte	Sattler, Peggy
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sergio, Mario
Coteau, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Singh, Jagmeet
Crack, Grant	MacLaren, Jack	Smith, Todd
Damerla, Dipika	Malhi, Harinder	Sousa, Charles
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Tabuns, Peter

Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe
DiNovo, Cheri
Dong, Han
Duguid, Brad
Dunlop, Garfield
Fedeli, Victor
Fife, Catherine
Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Forster, Cindy
French, Jennifer K.

Mantha, Michael
Martins, Cristina
Martow, Gila
Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill
McDonell, Jim
McGarry, Kathryn
McMahon, Eleanor
McMeekin, Ted
McNaughton, Monte
Meilleur, Madeleine
Milczyn, Peter Z.

Taylor, Monique
Thibault, Glenn
Thompson, Lisa M.
Vanthof, John
Vernile, Daiene
Walker, Bill
Wilson, Jim
Wong, Soo
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Yakubuski, John
Zimmer, David

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 95; the nays are 0.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

GREAT LAKES PROTECTION ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA PROTECTION
DES GRANDS LACS

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin / Projet de loi 66, Loi visant la protection et le rétablissement du bassin des Grands Lacs et du fleuve Saint-Laurent.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1155 to 1156.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On March 26, 2015, Mr. Murray moved second reading of Bill 66.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	French, Jennifer K.	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Anderson, Granville	Gates, Wayne	Miller, Paul
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gélinas, France	Moridi, Reza
Baker, Yvan	Gravelle, Michael	Murray, Glen R.
Balkissoon, Bas	Gretzky, Lisa	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Ballard, Chris	Hatfield, Percy	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoggarth, Ann	Oraziotti, David
Bisson, Gilles	Horwath, Andrea	Potts, Arthur
Bradley, James J.	Hoskins, Eric	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chan, Michael	Hunter, Mitzie	Rinaldi, Lou
Chiarelli, Bob	Jaczek, Helena	Sandals, Liz
Clark, Steve	Kiwala, Sophie	Sattler, Peggy
Colle, Mike	Kwinter, Monte	Sergio, Mario
Coteau, Michael	Lalonde, Marie-France	Singh, Jagmeet
Crack, Grant	Leal, Jeff	Sousa, Charles
Damerla, Dipika	Malhi, Harinder	Tabuns, Peter
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Taylor, Monique
	Mantha, Michael	Thibault, Glenn
	Martins, Cristina	Vanthof, John
	Matthews, Deborah	Vernile, Daiene
	Mauro, Bill	Wong, Soo
	McGarry, Kathryn	Wynne, Kathleen O.
	McMahon, Eleanor	Zimmer, David
	McMeekin, Ted	
	Meilleur, Madeleine	

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Arnett, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Barrett, Toby
Clark, Steve
Dunlop, Garfield
Hardeman, Ernie

Harris, Michael
Hudak, Tim
MacLaren, Jack
Martow, Gila
McDonnell, Jim
Munro, Julia

Nicholls, Rick
Pettapiece, Randy
Smith, Todd
Thompson, Lisa M.
Yakabuski, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 73; the nays are 17.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 2, 2015, the bill is ordered referred to the Standing Committee on General Government.

There are no further deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1200 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Jack MacLaren: It's my pleasure to introduce John Wakefield and Ed Maloney from Duoro-Dummer township. They're here about solar panels on farms that they object to.

As well, we have special guests from the Crimean Tatar Association of Canada: Liudmila Davydovych, Consul General of the Ukraine; Rustem Izaev, president of the Crimean-Tatar Association of Canada, and his wife, Elvira Maksudova. We have Volodymyr Paslavskiy, president of the Young Professionals and Skilled Workers Association. We have Peter Shturyn, vice-president of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress from Toronto. We have Olga Klymenko. We have Walter Kish, vice-president of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, provincial council, and we have Lydia Falcomer from the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Holodomor genocide committee.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It's my pleasure to introduce many activists from the LGBTQ community: Thomas Zaugg, Robert Savarie, Catherine Savarie, Vincent Bolt, Rita OLink, Jessica and Stella Skinner, Richard Hudler, Debbie Wooldridge, Darlyn Hansen, Gillian McKeown, Christine Newman, Susan Gapka and Pearse Murray. We welcome them to the House.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

Further introductions? The member from Dufferin-Caledon?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I was trying to be patient to see if our guests could make it. In the meantime, Speaker, when they are able to join us, will you please join me in welcoming some special guests who are here to honour

our colleague the member from Oxford for his life-saving bill to require carbon monoxide detectors?

In the members' gallery, imminently: From Brampton Fire Services are Fire Chief Michael Clark, Deputy Fire Chief Brian Maltby, Division Chief Andrew von Holt and Assistant Division Chief Tina Hickey, as well as Councillor Michael Palleschi from the city of Brampton. They are joined by Mary Ellen Sheppard and John Gignac, co-founders of the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation for CO education, and Doug DeRabbie from the Insurance Bureau of Canada.

I want to welcome them all to Queen's Park and thank them for their work in raising awareness for the need for carbon monoxide detectors.

Ms. Daine Vernile: It gives me great pleasure to introduce several family members who are here for the first time ever at Queen's Park. We have, from the riding of Willowdale, my parents, Carmine and Antonietta Vernile. We have my in-laws, who have made it here from Kitchener: Tony Matlock and his lovely wife, Jean Matlock. Tony is a former Ontario seniors' golfing champion. Sitting behind them is my husband, who's very patient and is driving everyone around today as the chauffeur: John Matlock.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CRIMEAN TATARS

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Today, I rise in the House to raise awareness among Ontarians about one of the cruelest moments in the history of humanity: the deportation of Crimean Tatars from Crimea in 1944, orchestrated by Joseph Stalin.

Under the false accusation of collective collaboration between Crimean Tatars and the Nazis, the Soviet government evicted over 240,000 Crimean people from their homeland in order to destroy them as an ethnic group. Within months, half of them died of cold, hunger, exhaustion and disease.

After the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014, the Crimean Tatars have been facing a new wave of violence and hatred. Their national leaders are banned from entering Crimea. Dozens of people were imprisoned during and shortly after the annexation, and many others are still missing.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to reaffirm my support for Canada's position on this issue. As Prime Minister of Canada the Right Honourable Stephen Harper said last spring, "Canada will never recognize this annexation as being the genuine will of the Ukrainian people." Crimea is Ukraine.

Let us not forget the victims of the Soviet regime. Let us not allow such atrocities to happen again in the future. Slava Ukraini.

PAN AM GAMES

Mr. Paul Miller: In five weeks, the Pan Am Games will open in Toronto. The largest event, the soccer tournament, will be hosted in my home city of Hamilton. Some of North and South America's finest players will be playing there.

You may have heard me from time to time question the management, planning and spending around these games, and with good reason. But have no doubt: I'm excited that the games are almost here. It has been 85 years since Hamilton hosted a major sporting tournament, the first Commonwealth Games, then known as the Empire Games. I'm proud that major international sport has returned to my city 85 years later.

Last Friday, I attended an exhibition soccer game at the new Tim Hortons Field in Hamilton. The soccer and football stadium, although substantially delayed, will be home to the Hamilton Tiger-Cats, Ontario's premier CFL team. I was delighted to watch Canada defeat England, and their fine performance shows that our women's team will truly be going for gold this July. I hope that as many Ontarians as possible come to Hamilton this July to cheer them on.

We, as a province, and as a community, have invested a lot—an awful lot—of time and money in the Pan/Parapan Am Games. I hope that the facilities developed and the dreams kindled there are supported and nurtured, so that we can see a legacy that endures for decades coming along.

I welcome the athletes, the coaches, the families and the spectators of the Pan/Parapan Am Games to Ontario, and I hope they have the time of their lives. They will find that the people of Hamilton are warm, gracious and love their sports.

CAMBRIDGE SPORTS HALL OF FAME

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: It's my pleasure to rise today and talk about an event in Cambridge from May 2. I was very pleased to attend the Cambridge Sports Hall of Fame annual induction ceremony in my riding. The Cambridge Sports Hall of Fame celebrates excellence in sports displayed by residents from around the Waterloo region. It has been a staple in Cambridge since it introduced the first class of inductees in 1997.

I was thrilled to be asked to present certificates to the honourees and again thank them publicly for serving as inspirational figures for my constituents.

The inductees into the hall of fame for this year were: hockey players Steve McKenna and Clarence "Dolly" Dolson; soccer player Robert Benedetti; ringette player Glen Gaudet; and harness racer Casie Coleman. Two teams were also inducted: the Cambridge Winter Hawks, who won the Sutherland Cup in 2006 and 2007, and the 2007 Southwood Sabres basketball team. Speaker, I have raised several Southwood Sabres, so I can't resist saying today, "Go, Sabres, Go!"

Steve McKenna spent several seasons playing with the Los Angeles Kings, Minnesota Wild, Pittsburgh Penguins and the New York Rangers.

Glen Gaudet coached a national ringette team in 2011 and led Ontario to gold medals in the Canada Winter Games three times.

Robert Benedetti started for Team Canada at the Pan Am Games and was named Ontario athlete of the year in 1967.

All of these athletes achieved great things in their sports. I was very glad to have the chance to honour them.

MEMBER FOR OXFORD

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Earlier this afternoon I introduced representatives from the city of Brampton's fire department. They are heroes in our community, people who put their lives at risk to save others. But today they're here to recognize one of our colleagues as a hero for his work in saving lives.

The member from Oxford had a tragedy in his riding when OPP safety officer Laurie Hawkins and her family were tragically killed by carbon monoxide that had built up in their home. Since then, the member for Oxford, working with Laurie's uncle John Gignac, has made it his mission to try to prevent more tragedies like this.

1310

The member for Oxford—can I call him Ernie?

Mr. Tim Hudak: Yes.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Ernie introduced a bill which would require carbon monoxide detectors in all of our homes. Thanks to his work, every home in Ontario with a fuel-burning appliance or attached garage is now required to have a carbon monoxide detector.

The Brampton fire department is here today because they've seen first-hand that this law saves lives. A Brampton couple, Fahad and Serena Dharani-Fasih, bought carbon monoxide detectors for their home because of the new law. A short time later, they were woken in the middle of the night by the detector sounding. The heat exchanger on their furnace had cracked and was leaking carbon monoxide. With the levels in their home, they might not be alive today if they hadn't installed the carbon monoxide detector.

I'm pleased that the Brampton fire department has come to honour my colleague, especially as he celebrates his 20th anniversary as Oxford's MPP next Monday. I want to add my congratulations and praise for all of the work that he has done and will do.

HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

M^{me} France Gélinas: Today I rise to reiterate what a raw deal Sudbury Downs got from this cash-strapped government. Before the Liberals wasted \$1 billion to save a few seats in Mississauga, Sudbury Downs was a prosperous and popular racetrack, a racetrack that led to farmers growing hay, boarding and training horses, and even growing veggies for our local market thanks to the income that the horses were providing.

But when the Liberal government eliminated the Slots at Racetracks Program in 2012, it was the beginning of the end. Sudbury Downs tried and tried to get a five-year or even a four-year commitment from OLG, a commitment needed to attract horses and breeders to northern Ontario, but to no avail. This led to all the related businesses to wither on the vine.

Why, Speaker? Because this government and the OLG want casinos. Their greed stinks of desperation. The OLG exists to raise money for the government and to serve the public good.

This government doesn't understand that although the minute the slot machine rolls off the assembly line in China and gets plugged in, sure, it adds to the bottom line, but it doesn't create value-added. It doesn't serve the public good.

By contrast, when a horse pulls around the last bend and sprints toward the finish line, behind it are trainers, breeders, veterinarians, jockeys and 100 real jobs in agricultural areas of Nickel Belt. It is disappointing that our agricultural Premier can't understand that, although she promised just that three years ago.

ITALIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Earlier this week, I joined my colleagues on the front lawn of the Legislature to mark Italian Heritage Month, recognizing the important contributions and achievements of Italian Canadians. Ontario is home to more than 1.3 million people of Italian heritage, including a few thousand in Kitchener Centre.

These immigrants began arriving in significant numbers in the early 20th century to work on farms, in factories and mines. But it was after the Second World War that a huge wave swept in from regions with names such as Lazio, Abruzzo, Friuli and Calabria. These war-impooverished immigrants came looking for opportunities and a peaceful place to build a new life.

Among the hundreds of thousands who poured in were my own parents back in 1957; I just introduced you to them. Newly married and just 23 and 25 years of age, they had about 50 bucks in their pocket, did not speak the language and had little education, but they were ready to work and to contribute.

Their story is similar to Italian immigrants who worked hard in this country. They bought a house. They raised children. They grew an awesome garden in the backyard which still features a fig tree today. Food, wine and familiar songs are part of what connected them to their beloved Italia, but what distinguishes them as part of the narrative of Ontario's story today is their unmistakable achievement of helping to build this province.

Remarks in Italian.

DOROTHY RUNGELING

Mr. Tim Hudak: Speaker, a constituent of mine had always been afraid to fly. Planes terrified her—that is, until her five-year-old son, Barry, goaded her one day to

get up in a plane for a test run. Now, since Bill Pr20 passed this morning—and I'm thankful for the support from all three parties here in the Legislature—they are going to name an airport after her.

I'll take you back to that day in 1948. She was 37 years old. On that first flight, the bug bit her. After she went up with her five-year-old son—the next day—without telling her son or her husband, she went back to the airport and took flying lessons. Before you knew it, she was the first woman in Canada to fly in international air races, one of the first Canadian women to hold a commercial air licence, the first Canadian woman to fly a helicopter solo, and the first to hold an airline transport licence. She won a national aviation reporting prize. She blazed trails for women in flight right across Canada and North America.

That's not it, by the way. She also was the first female councillor in the town of Pelham. She, with her husband, Charles, ran a car dealership in Welland. She was an equestrian, a musician and an artist. She has published four books.

Here's the happy news too: She turned 104 just a couple of weeks ago.

Dorothy Rungeling, now 104, doesn't fly quite as much as she used to. But because the bill passed with all-party support, I'm pleased to say that the Niagara Central Airport will now be the Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport.

I thank members for their support. It's an historic day in the town of Pelham and the peninsula. I thank Cindy Forster, the member for Welland, who has been a big supporter of this bill as well.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. My goodness, we're all happy.

PORTUGAL DAY

Mr. Han Dong: I rise today to recognize and celebrate Portugal Day. Although officially observed only in Portugal, Portuguese citizens and emigrants throughout the world celebrate this important holiday. The day commemorates the death of national literary icon Luís de Camões on June 10, 1580.

Interjection: Camões.

Mr. Han Dong: Camões—that's right. Thank you.

In Toronto, over 200,000 Portuguese Canadians celebrate by holding a multitude of events surrounding the date of June 10. The week-long festival ends with the Portugal Day parade on Dundas Street, in the area known as Little Portugal. The parade ends near Trinity Bellwoods Park, where concerts, cultural events and other activities take place.

The Portugal Day parade is Toronto's third-largest street festival, and was first celebrated in 1966. This is a much-anticipated celebration in my riding of Trinity-Spadina and in MPP Cristina Martins's riding of Davenport.

Portugal Day demonstrates our cultural diversity in Toronto and is an excellent opportunity for us to cele-

brate our multicultural heritage. I invite all members of this House and all Ontarians to join in the celebration of Portugal Day and to join us on June 10 to raise the flag of Portugal outside the Legislature.

SENIORS' MONTH

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I'm pleased to rise today to talk about the wonderful seniors of our province. This June marks the 31st anniversary of Seniors' Month in Ontario, and it's a time for us to recognize and celebrate the remarkable impact that seniors have had on all of our lives. It's also a time to think about how we can assist and support our seniors after they have given us a lifetime of service.

Building a greater understanding of seniors and their needs is one of the best ways that we can express our appreciation for what they have done for us and what they are still doing today. Seniors are deeply involved in our communities, and their contributions benefit Ontarians of all ages.

Our government is committed to providing care and support to residents at every age. That's why I'm proud that Ontario is working hard to develop a comprehensive strategy for Alzheimer's and dementia care. It's an issue that touches so many people's lives, and it's one of the most pressing and serious matters facing seniors today.

Celebrating Seniors' Month raises awareness about the difficult challenges and adjustments our aging residents experience every day. It's not enough just to be aware of these difficulties; we must invest our resources to meet the needs of our elderly citizens.

I look forward to taking part in many of the events this month, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to offer a final thank you to all the seniors in this province and across the country for all they have done to build Ontario up.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I thank all members for their statements.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE POLICY COMITÉ PERMANENT DE LA JUSTICE

M. Shafiq Qaadri: Je demande la permission de déposer un rapport du Comité permanent de la justice et je propose son adoption.

Speaker, I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Justice Policy and move its adoption, and send it to you via page Robert.

1320

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. Trevor Day): Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regard-

ing efforts to change or direct sexual orientation or gender identity / *Projet de loi 77, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-santé et la Loi de 1991 sur les professions de la santé réglementées à l'égard des interventions visant à changer ou à influencer l'orientation sexuelle ou l'identité sexuelle,*

The title of which is amended to read:

Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regarding efforts to change sexual orientation or gender identity / *Projet de loi 77, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-santé et la Loi de 1991 sur les professions de la santé réglementées à l'égard des interventions visant à changer l'orientation sexuelle ou l'identité sexuelle.*

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

Report adopted.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LES LIMITES DES CIRCONSCRIPTIONS ÉLECTORALES

Madame Meilleur moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 115, An Act to enact the Representation Act, 2015, repeal the Representation Act, 2005 and amend the Election Act, the Election Finances Act and the Legislative Assembly Act / *Projet de loi 115, Loi édictant la Loi de 2015 sur la représentation électorale, abrogeant la Loi de 2005 sur la représentation électorale et modifiant la Loi électorale, la Loi sur le financement des élections et la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative.*

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for a short statement.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: If passed, the Electoral Boundaries Act would help ensure that Ontarians continue to have a strong voice and effective representation at Queen's Park. The proposed legislation will create 15 new ridings in southern Ontario in areas that have seen substantial growth in recent years. This change will align these ridings with the new federal boundaries.

It is important to point out that, while we are aligning with federal boundaries in the south, in the north the boundaries will not change. The 11 ridings in northern Ontario will stay the same to ensure that northern communities continue to have effective representation in the Legislature.

I urge all the members to support our proposed legislation for a stronger and more inclusive Ontario.

CORRECTIONAL SERVICES STAFF
RECOGNITION WEEK ACT, 2015
LOI DE 2015 SUR LA SEMAINE
DE LA RECONNAISSANCE
DU PERSONNEL DES SERVICES
CORRECTIONNELS

Ms. Naidoo-Harris moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 116, An Act to proclaim Correctional Services Staff Recognition Week / Projet de loi 116, Loi proclamant la Semaine de la reconnaissance du personnel des services correctionnels.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for a short statement.

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: The bill proclaims the week commencing on the first Monday in May each year as Correctional Services Staff Recognition Week.

Correctional services staff dedicate their lives to protecting the public with skill and professionalism. They work hard to keep communities safe. Their public service deserves to be recognized and honoured. I look forward to discussing the merits of this bill in the near future.

MOTIONS

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 77

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regarding efforts to change sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 79(b), the order for third reading of Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regarding efforts to change sexual orientation or gender identity, may be called today; and

That the order for third reading of Bill 77 be immediately called; and

That the question be put on the motion for third reading without debate or amendment.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that, notwithstanding standing order 79(b), the order for third reading of Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Agreed. Dispensed.

Carried.

Motion agreed to.

AFFIRMING SEXUAL ORIENTATION
AND GENDER IDENTITY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR L’AFFIRMATION
DE L’ORIENTATION SEXUELLE
ET DE L’IDENTITÉ SEXUELLE

Ms. DiNovo moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regarding efforts to change sexual orientation or gender identity / Projet de loi 77, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-santé et la Loi de 1991 sur les professions de la santé réglementées à l'égard des interventions visant à changer l'orientation sexuelle ou l'identité sexuelle.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Do we agree? Agreed. Carried.

Be it now resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

PETITIONS

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Mr. Jack MacLaren: I have a petition here concerning the Green Energy Act and the wrongs it puts on people's private property.

"The residents of Douro-Dummer township and the greater Peterborough area are against the proposed 150-200-acres solar project planned for the 8th Line of Douro between County Road 4 and County Road 32:

"(1) The property in question contains numerous pockets of prime (CL 1, 2, 3) agricultural land and organic land.

"(2) The property in question is a tiled farm (excellent drainage) with some of the best, productive farmland in Douro-Dummer township.

"(3) The Douro-Dummer council has unanimously voted down this solar farm proposal.

"(4) Thousands of foundation holes will be drilled into the bedrock during the construction phase, which can increase the risk of soil contamination from petroleum lubricants and chemicals (which may be used to kill vegetation near the solar panels).

"(5) After the 20-year project phase is over, this farmland will never be returned to its original, pristine state.

"(6) ORCA (Otonabee Regional Conservation Authority) development lines run through the proposed section of land, as do several underground streams, some of which run through a Trent source protected drinking water zone, past dug wells, and into the Trent-Severn waterway. Risk for contamination during construction is real.

"(7) Productive farmland in Ontario is disappearing at an alarming rate. Industrial solar projects should be built solely on rooftops and poor quality brownfields only.

"We, the undersigned, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to put a stop to the solar project planned for the 8th Line of Douro."

Mr. Speaker, I agree with this petition. I affix my signature to it, and I give it to page Madeleine to take to the desk.

MINING INDUSTRY

Ms. Sarah Campbell: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas we, the undersigned residents of Ontario, draw the attention of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to the following:

"That Ontario is the only province to not apply its environmental assessment process to the full extent for mining projects; and

"That Treasury Metals' open-pit Goliath gold mine project in Wabigoon, Ontario, is proposed to develop on Thunder Lake very near to human habitation; and

"That the mine shall impact residents living near the mine site in terms of noise, light and dust pollution; and

"That the proposed plan for effluent dispersal is into Wabigoon Lake, which serves as drinking water intake for the town of Dryden, Ontario, as well as being a local and tourist fishing site; and

"That the proposed effluent dispersal site is near a sensitive fish spawning area (Christie Island); and

"That a tailings pond breach or spill would seriously impact the health of all local residents, potentially jeopardizing the local drinking water supply; and

"That an individual environmental assessment would evaluate the environmental and health risks of a large-scale and complex mining operation; and

"That an individual environmental assessment would allow for a more in-depth commentary period with input and involvement from those familiar with the local landscape and community;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Require that the Treasury Metals' Goliath mine project be subject to an individual environmental assessment under the Environmental Assessment Act."

I will affix my signature.

1330

CREDIT UNIONS

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I have a number of petitions here that are addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and read as follows:

"Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario support our 1.3 million members across Ontario through loans to small businesses to start up, grow and create jobs, help families to buy homes and assist their communities with charitable investments and volunteering; and

"Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario want a level playing field so they can provide the same service to our members as other financial institutions and promote

economic growth without relying on taxpayers' resources;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Support the strength and growth of credit unions to support the strength and growth of Ontario's economy and create jobs in three ways:

"—maintain current credit union provincial tax rates;

"—show confidence in Ontario credit unions by increasing credit union-funded deposit insurance limits to a minimum of \$250,000;

"—allow credit unions to diversify by allowing Ontario credit unions to own 100% of subsidiaries."

I agree with this petition, am going to affix my name and send it to the table with page Jany.

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the regulation surrounding patient repatriation to Ontario is failing the people of the province;

"Whereas many patients that fall ill outside of Ontario do not fall under Ontario's life-or-limb policy or repatriation guide;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The provincial government should ensure that all Ontarians are treated fairly and in a timely manner regardless of the location where they fall ill; and

"That the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care develop a comprehensive strategy and updated legislation and regulation surrounding repatriation measures for those who fall ill outside of Ontario."

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition. I'll affix my signature, and I'll send it to the table with Star.

WAY-FINDING SIGNS

Mr. Michael Mantha: This petition is for way-finding signs on MTO roads in northern Ontario.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the MTO currently does not allow established trail way-finding signs on MTO highways, and way-finding signs are helpful in guiding cyclists in northern Ontario where we often have no other options than using MTO roads;

"Whereas cycling tourism has become a significant part of Manitoulin's tourist economy, with an established network of cycling routes, many of which cannot be done without travelling on portions of MTO highways;

"Whereas Manitoulin's economic development hinges on making tourists feel welcome and safe;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To allow way-finding signs on MTO roads in northern Ontario and to immediately allow a pilot project of way-finding signs on MTO road sections of cycling

routes found in MICA's Manitoulin Island and LaCloche Mountains Cycling Routes and Road Map."

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition and present it to page Ram to bring down to the Clerks' table.

WATER FLUORIDATION

Mr. Bob Delaney: I'm pleased to present this group of petitions addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly and supplied by many of our local dentists and signed by hundreds of their patients. They're entitled, "Fluoridate All Ontario Drinking Water." They read as follows:

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second-most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, a concentration providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentration to protect against adverse health effects; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

I'm pleased to sign and support this petition and to send it down with page Emma on her last day with us. Have a good summer, Emma.

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Mr. Bill Walker: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Alzheimer's disease and other dementias are progressive, degenerative diseases of the brain that cause thinking, memory and physical functioning to become seriously impaired;

"Whereas there is no known cause or cure for this devastating illness; and

"Whereas Alzheimer's disease and other dementias also take their toll on hundreds of thousands of families and care partners; and

"Whereas Alzheimer's disease and other dementias affect more than 200,000 Ontarians today, with an annual total economic burden rising to \$15.7 billion by 2020; and

"Whereas the cost related to the health care system is in the billions and only going to increase, at a time when our health care system is already facing enormous financial challenges; and

"Whereas there is work under way to address the need, but no coordinated or comprehensive approach to tackling the issues; and

"Whereas there is an urgent need to plan and raise awareness and understanding about Alzheimer's disease and other dementias for the sake of improving the quality of life of the people it touches;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To approve the development of a comprehensive Ontario dementia plan that would include the development of strategies in primary health care, in health promotion and prevention of illness, in community development, in building community capacity and care partner engagement, in caregiver support and investments in research."

I fully support it, will affix my name and send it with page Jany.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Ms. Cindy Forster: I have thousands of petitions here.

"Whereas the decision to close the Welland general hospital was made without consultation with the residents of south Niagara, and without regard for potential social and economic impacts of this closure; and

"Whereas the recommendations to the government contained in Dr. Kevin Smith's report on restructuring of the Niagara Health System included no evidence to support the closure of the Welland general hospital; no needs assessment for the residents of south Niagara; no costing of the entire restructuring plan; and no proposals to mitigate the impact of reduced hospital access;

"Whereas the catchment area of the Welland general hospital includes four municipalities, with a population of over 90,000, including a high percentage (+25%) of seniors and people living in poverty;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"(1) Stop the planned closure of the Welland general hospital;

"(2) Conduct a proper third-party evidence-based study to assess the present and projected health care and hospital services requirements of residents in the catchment area of the Welland general hospital;

"(3) Hold public consultations, not only during the assessment process, but also on recommendations resulting from this study."

I support this petition, affix my signature and send it with page Ram.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I have a petition for the Toronto French secondary school.

“Whereas section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees access to publicly funded French-language education; and

“Whereas there are more than 1,000 children attending French elementary schools in east Toronto (Beaches–East York and Toronto–Danforth) and those numbers continue to grow; and

“Whereas there is no French secondary school (grades 7-12) yet in east Toronto, requiring students wishing to continue their studies in French school boards to travel two hours every day to attend the closest French secondary school, while several English schools in east Toronto sit half-empty since there are no requirements or incentives for school boards to release underutilized schools to other boards in need; and

“Whereas it is well documented that children leave the French-language system for the English-language system between grades 7 and 9 due to the inaccessibility of French-language secondary schools, and that it is also well established that being educated in French at the elementary level is not sufficient to solidify French-language skills for life; and

“Whereas the Ontario government acknowledged in February 2007 that there is an important shortage of French-language schools in all of Toronto and even provided funds to open some secondary schools, and yet, not a single French secondary school has opened in east Toronto; and

“Whereas the commissioner of French-language services stated in a report in June 2011 that ‘... time is running out to address the serious shortage of at least one new French-language school at the secondary level in the eastern part of the city of Toronto’; and

1340

“Whereas the Ministry of Education has confirmed that we all benefit when school board properties are used effectively in support of publicly funded education and that the various components of our education system should be aligned to serve the needs of students; and

“Whereas parents and students from both French Catholic and French public elementary schools in east Toronto are prepared to find common ground across all language school systems to secure space for a French-language secondary school in east Toronto;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Minister of Education assist one or both French school boards in locating a suitable underutilized school building in east Toronto that may be sold or shared for the purpose of opening a French secondary school (grades 7-12) in the community by September 2015, so that French students have a secondary school close to where they live.”

I sign this petition and hand it to Kerry.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

Mr. Bill Walker: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas it has been over a decade since regulation 316/03 of the Highway Traffic Act has been updated to recognize new classes of off-road vehicles and a motion to do so passed on November 7, 2013, with unanimous support of the provincial Legislature;

“Whereas owners of two-up ATVs and side-by-side UTVs deserve clarity in knowing which roadways and trails are legal for use of these off-road vehicles; and

“Whereas owners should be able to legally use their vehicles to access woodlots, trails and hunting and fishing destinations;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That private member’s Bill 58, which seeks to update the Highway Traffic Act to include new classes of all-terrain and utility task vehicles, receive swift passage through the Legislature.”

I fully support this and will affix my name.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition, and I’d like to thank Diane Luttrell from Garson for collecting it. It reads as follows:

“Privatizing Hydro One: Another Wrong Choice.

“Whereas once you privatize hydro, there’s no return; and

“We’ll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

“We’ll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

“We’ll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what’s happened elsewhere;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it et je demande à mon page Julien de l’amener à la table des greffiers.

PRIVATE MEMBERS’
PUBLIC BUSINESSENDING PREDATORY ELECTRICITY
RETAILING ACT, 2015LOI DE 2015 SUR L’ÉLIMINATION
DES PRIX ABUSIFS DANS LA VENTE
AU DÉTAIL D’ÉLECTRICITÉ

Ms. Campbell moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 111, An Act to amend the Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010 to eliminate fixed rate electricity

contracts between retailers and consumers / *Projet de loi 111, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2010 sur la protection des consommateurs d'énergie pour éliminer les contrats de fourniture d'électricité à tarif fixe entre détaillants et consommateurs.*

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: It is a pleasure to rise and debate Bill 111, entitled the Ending Predatory Electricity Retailing Act, a bill I am proud to be reintroducing in this Parliament. When I first introduced this bill in November 2013, it passed first and second reading and was referred to committee, but we didn't see any further action from this government on this particular file other than the Ontario Energy Board's review of the Energy Consumer Protection Act, which was completed just this past Monday, and the government's newly introduced Bill 112, which was also introduced this week and which seeks to further regulate electricity retailing across the province. It's my hope that we can take Bill 111 all the way through to royal assent this year.

I would like to start by welcoming my family, who has joined us here today at Queen's Park this afternoon: my partner Scott and our beautiful baby girl, Paisley. They have had to make a quick exit to do that kind of baby thing that sometimes happens at not quite the most opportune times, so they're watching from my office. Nevertheless, they're here, and they made the trek from Kenora—Rainy River.

Over the past several years in particular, we, as legislators in this House, have devoted a lot of time to the affordability of electricity across Ontario. It's safe to say that it's one of the greatest concerns facing Ontarians today, especially for those of us living in the north. Since 2003, when the Liberals took over, our hydro rates have climbed 300%. This has pushed many families and seniors to the brink of not being able to afford to live, as their Hydro One bills continue to gobble up increasingly more of their paycheques or pensions, leaving less and less money to put other essentials—like food—on the table.

To add insult to injury, a few years ago the Liberals told us to brace ourselves and to expect our hydro bills to soar another 46%—46%. This year's budget, which the Liberals so exuberantly passed yesterday, also guaranteed the elimination of the clean energy benefit, a modest yet much-relied-upon 10% reduction of the price of our hydro bills. And in doing so, the Liberals have effectively shut the door to any kind of hydro relief.

It is this kind of situation—already unaffordable hydro bills coupled with a horrifying commitment to a huge rate hike and the loss of any kind of financial relief—that makes the prospect of “fixed rate” electricity contracts seem attractive, especially to people who are just barely keeping afloat as it is. But make no mistake: If you're looking to save money on your hydro bills, staying public is your only option.

Electricity retailers are a bizarre holdover from the PC government's brief experiment with rate deregulation, an

era that ended over 10 years ago. During the brief period of rate deregulation, electricity retailers were permitted to enter the market to offer consumers competition and choice. They marketed themselves as a means to bring stability to our hydro bills when ongoing prices were uncertain. The electricity retailer concept, legislated in part V.1 of the Ontario Energy Board Act, provided that in a competitive market, retailers would be allowed to serve consumers by allowing them to pay higher electricity rates in exchange for the price stability and predictability that a fixed contract provides.

But shortly after the PC's embraced deregulation, the government turned away from the open market concept for electricity and the Ontario Energy Board instituted the Regulated Price Plan, which guarantees relatively stable rates and where consumers pay for electricity that better reflects the price paid to generators, without paying private companies the added padding of profits.

With the introduction of a regulated price plan, there is no reason for the energy retailing industry to exist. Nevertheless, consumers and customers continued to sign on with private electricity retailers in the belief that future prices—future higher prices, I should say—can be avoided by signing a long-term contract with a retailer. But contracts with retailers are usually for the cost of power only, and they don't protect against increases in delivery, regulatory, global adjustment or other non-energy charges, which leaves customers paying more—much more.

In fact, the continued presence of electricity retailers affects the entire rate base, imposing regulatory and enforcement costs, distorting price signals and limiting the government's efforts to encourage energy use during lower-peak hours.

A brand new report by the Ontario Energy Board entitled *Consumers Come First: A Report of the Ontario Energy Board on the Effectiveness of ... the Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010*, which was released this past Monday, found that consumers who had signed a five-year, fixed-rate contract between 2006 and 2009 were paying 82% more for electricity than they would have paid if they had stuck with their local utility. These customers were paying more even though the reason that they were signing these fixed-rate contracts was to save money. The report says, “There seems to be a disconnect between what consumers say they want and what they are actually getting.”

The OEB's new figures are even worse than the terrible numbers from the Ontario Auditor General's 2011 annual report, which reported that approximately 15% of the province's customers are currently signed up with a retailer and paying between 35% and 65% more than customers paying regular hydro rates to their local utilities.

I've personally heard from and met with hundreds of people who have been negatively affected by a bad deal with an electricity retailer. I've heard from pensioners, families and single people who have signed up, desperate for some sort of reprieve from the gargantuan hydro bills

they have been receiving. People with English as a second language, professionals, and even a well-meaning Ontario Works administrator, who signed up all of her clients: These people signed up, either thinking that they would finally receive a much-needed break on their hydro bills, or because they were, in one way or another, misled or coerced into signing a contract. But all of these people, rather unfortunately, only ended up locked into the opposite scenario, where they were stuck paying significantly more and making an already unaffordable situation worse. From the conversations that I've had with other members of this Legislature, I know my constituency isn't alone in having these experiences.

1350

In an article in the *Hamilton Spectator* in April 2014, well-respected professional engineer and Ontario energy consultant Bruce Sharp advises people, "Learn to open and close the door in one smooth motion," and reject energy retailers. He goes on to write, "On the surface, energy retailers' message that contracting with them can provide protection has some appeal. This is false."

Energy retailers impose huge regulatory and enforcement costs on the whole system. Retailer practices such as door-to-door sales and the use of misleading information account for 70% to 90% of complaint calls to the OEB. The OEB has also found that 60% of all fixed-rate contracts do not survive the OEB's verification process.

The government's newly introduced Bill 112 is just their latest attempt to rein in runaway electricity retailers. If passed, it would attempt to reform the electricity retailing industry by allowing the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations establishing rules governing the manner, time and circumstances under which a supplier or salesperson may advertise or market the sale of electricity or gas to a consumer in person at the person's home. This is, as I mentioned, just the latest attempt to try to level the playing field and create some fairness for the consumer.

Shortly after the rate deregulation that gave rise to electricity retailers in 2002, the government made amendments to the 1998 OEB act to include an energy consumers' bill of rights. But despite this change, complaints persisted and the volume of complaints soared. Then, in 2010, after hundreds of complaints every year of unethical business practices, the government revisited the issue of consumer protection and passed the Energy Consumer Protection Act. The ECPA, although designed to eliminate customer complaints and offer some protection, has failed to do its job. While complaints were reduced, the OEB is still receiving many complaints, including those around pitches, contracts, reaffirmation and verification of contracts, cancellations and renewals.

Now, through Bill 112, introduced earlier this week, the government is proposing to make changes to the selling of these contracts on the doorstep and increasing the length of the cooling-off period, during which time people are free to change their minds and cancel the contract without penalty. But given all the complaints brought forward to the Ontario Energy Board and the

various failed attempts made by the Ontario government over the years to curtail electricity retailers, it's clear that electricity retailing needs to be phased out, not reformed. Not only would phasing out private fixed-price contracts for residential customers offer the ultimate protection to Ontarians, but the Electricity Distributors Association states that it will save the electricity system—meaning those of us who haven't signed on with an electricity retailer—approximately \$260 million per year.

Let's turn to the contents of this bill and see what it seeks to do. It essentially has four parts. It will disallow further new, private fixed-rate contracts for residential customers. The bill provides that contracts between retailers and consumers for the provision of electricity at a fixed rate that are entered into after a specified day are deemed to be void.

It will phase out existing retailer contracts with residential customers by allowing them to expire. All standing contracts held between customers and electricity retailers would be allowed to expire. The retailer will not be allowed to seek renewals with customers, and the contracts will be void on the expiry date.

It will allow private electricity retailing in circumstances where institutional, industrial and commercial customers decide that it is in their best financial interests.

And it will offer consumer protection. The act further provides various protections to consumers who enter into contracts that are deemed to be void under the act. Such protections include the right to a refund of money paid under a void contract and the freedom from liability for obligations under such a contract.

Considering the cost to consumers, the costs associated with increased regulatory burden, the fact that numerous government attempts at regulating electricity retailers have failed to adequately protect consumers and that the regulated price plan has effectively made private electricity retailers redundant and obsolete, I believe it's incumbent upon all the members of this House to ban electricity retailers from selling to low-volume residential consumers in the province of Ontario.

I sincerely hope that members will see the merits of this bill and vote to support it at second reading today.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Bob Delaney: Speaker, I'm pleased to provide some comments on the bill put forth by the member.

The bill before the Legislature will not save consumers money, nor will it protect consumers and households from fly-by-night energy vendors. Indeed, in the event it should ever be adopted, it will merely require electricity vendor charlatans to slightly change their marketing tactics. Banning fixed-rate electricity contracts would not only not do what the bill asserts it would do, but it would also end up wasting a lot of public money in futile legal fees until the measure would either be struck down in the courts or ruled unconstitutional, whichever comes first.

Indeed, should the Legislature refer this bill to a committee, the various participants in the electricity sector,

both legitimate and undesirable, will weigh in to demonstrate the unworkability of the proposal made by the member.

As proposed, all a vendor needs to do is offer a contract that, for example, charges a slightly different rate for even a brief period of time. Technically and legally, such a vendor would not violate any law arising from this bill, and that's just one easy way to circumvent it.

The member, however, makes a valid point in stating that private energy vendors include some entities whose marketing practices are dishonest, deceitful and predatory. At my own home, I have answered the door to be greeted by smiling people with laminated ID cards with company names purposely similar to an established and reputable vendor. The so-called sales literature is laughable, and I actually wonder how they find people to go door to door with a business pitch so obviously greasy and manipulative.

While I have the floor, let me remind my neighbours in Lisgar, Meadowvale, Streetsville and throughout western Mississauga that Enersource, which distributes our electricity—and which is a private company, by the way—does not go door to door. If someone rings your doorbell and asks you for a copy of your electricity bill, your gas bill, your water bill, your phone bill or any bill, for that matter, close the door and send them away. Reputable companies don't do business that way.

Rather than this fatally flawed proposal, what could Ontario do that would be constructive? As far back as 2010, our government brought in the Energy Consumer Protection Act, to ensure that consumers receive accurate information from energy retailers before signing a contract or renewal. It gives consumers much stronger measures to cancel a contract than this bill proposes.

The Ministry of Energy is proposing amendments to the Energy Consumer Protection Act. Among the proposals in the amendments tabled by the ministry would be measures to ban door-to-door sales of electricity and gas contracts. It wouldn't matter how you propose to charge for it; you couldn't close a deal door to door should the proposals by the ministry receive approval.

The proposal before this House is not an effective way to protect consumers.

In closing, may I congratulate the member and her family on the birth of her new baby and wish her a pleasant summer.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise to discuss Bill 111 before the House. I want to welcome the member from Kenora–Rainy River back, congratulate her and wish her nothing but the best with her family addition. I have to confess that I don't know if it's a boy or a girl.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: A girl.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Paisley.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Congratulations on Paisley. It's nice to see you back as well.

Now to the bill: I share some of the views—what's going on here: the member from Mississauga–Streetsville and I starting to think alike? This is very, very concerning. I just hope that the Kool-Aid line that runs into the Liberal caucus room hasn't somehow leaked into the PC caucus room and I got some of it.

1400

There are definitely some challenges with regard to this bill, but let's talk about why the member from Kenora–Rainy River, Ms. Campbell, has brought out this legislation. There's no question that, over the years, we have seen horror stories about the practices of unscrupulous energy retailers. The issues were before this House prior to my arriving here almost 12 years ago. I remember the discussions. If I recall, if I'm not wrong—and Jim Bradley will nod or shake his head; one or the other—I believe that David Ramsay brought forth a private member's bill to deal with energy retailers at one time. I think the House then probed, and I believe that was Gerry Phillips, as the minister, who brought forth a bill that actually dealt, in a more concrete way, with the challenges. You'll all remember the Marketplace story about the abhorrent practices—of these energy retailers at the time. To be fair, a lot of that has changed and a lot of it has been cleaned up.

Myself as an MPP, I can't tell you how many people we have fought for successfully and gotten them out of electricity contracts. When I first came here, there were a lot of people that also signed gas contracts. They were happier than could be, because shortly after I got here, the price of gas escalated almost two and a half times. Those people who had gas contracts thought that, my God, they'd died and gone to listen. My brother in Owen Sound had a gas contract. He couldn't believe it. He was just laughing all the way to the bank when the gas went up. However, today, gas has gone down again, other than spikes because of some weather issues last winter—not this past winter; the winter before.

The risk goes both ways with a fixed-rate contract. That's essentially what Ms. Campbell's bill will do: end the practice of fixed-rate contracts. They won't be allowed in the future. Even fixed-rate contracts that exist today: At the time of their expiration, the details would have to be rewritten and they could not re-up on it unless they could cancel with notice but without penalty on the part of the consumer.

Some of those are some very good things, but Mr. Delaney raised some very good points with regard to the constitutionality because—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would just ask the member to remember that we refer to members by riding, not name.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I did refer to the riding, but anyway, whatever; I'll do my best. Sometimes I forget.

The member from Timmins–James Bay and I may want to engage in a contract for whatever. That should be within our rights to do so, providing that both of us are cognizant of our risks and possible rewards within that contract. This would essentially not allow people to enter

into contracts. So I have some concerns about that. I'm not the legal expert here, but I'm sure that there will be some legal people concerned about that very part of it.

As I was saying, I can't count how many contracts we got people out of and were able to make the argument that they were coerced into it; that they were not done in a fair way. Probably the most famous one—I don't say the most famous one, but the one I remember the most—was my own mother-in-law. At the time, my mother-in-law would have been in her late seventies. She came here from Germany—Lithuania prior to that—and was not well versed in English, and she signed one of these energy contracts. It went on for months. She didn't want to say anything to me about it because I think she was embarrassed. But finally my wife's sister said something to my wife, and I said, "Elma, why didn't you call me?" "Oh, I just felt so stupid." She just blamed it on herself. And, my God, she was just getting hosed. Anyway, we got my mother-in-law out of that contract. So it's not maybe the most famous one, but it's certainly the one that was most clear to me that the practice needed to be reformed.

The government did bring in a bill in 2010 that essentially did bring a lot more reforms to this field and, with all due respect, the number of complaints did drop dramatically. The retailers got it and the people got it, and they knew that the legislation did have some teeth in it, that it was not going to be a free-for-all anymore.

But some of the practices were absolutely heinous, the way they were able to get away with it. As I say, if you remember that Marketplace exposé back around 2005, or 2006 maybe—I can't remember exactly when—it was pretty graphic about the practices that were going on. One of the challenges was these people would be hired as door-to-door representatives, and the only way they ever made a nickel was if they sold that contract. The incentive to sell that contract was stronger than the incentive to be honest, I guess. Unfortunately, that is part of the human condition sometimes, and they fell victim to that themselves; they could not handle the temptation to sign that contract and proceeded to do so in an unethical way.

One of the differences is—I'm sure the member from Kenora-Rainy River has given this some consideration—there are still energy retailers out there. They certainly have cleaned up their act, but many of the contracts that they work with today are not fixed-rate contracts but flat-rate contracts. Your legislation says nothing about flat-rate contracts. A flat-rate contract, Mr. Speaker, is one in which you and I have a contract—I won't speak to you by name because that would be against the rules of the House. The member from Scarborough-Rouge River, who is also the Speaker here today—if you and I enter into a flat-rate contract, then I'm agreeing to sell you electricity at, say, \$40 a month, with no adjustment year-end. So \$40 a month times 12: That's the flat rate I'm selling you electricity at.

People have this budget billing with hydro, where they pay the same amount every month so that they're able to

budget for it, but at the end of the year they have an adjustment. They may have to pay a little top-up or they may get a credit on their bill, but it's done in a way that they use the past history of a person's billing and they assess it and say, "Well, if everything goes according to Hoyle and things haven't changed, then this should be about what you're going to use per month."

In the case of the member from Kenora-Rainy River, or people like her—let's say somebody has four kids all of a sudden in the house. You know what? Their electricity use is going to change dramatically. If they're on a budget billing, they're going to find that, "Whoa. I got a bill at the end of the year from Ontario Hydro," or Hydro One now, "and it just blew me away." Your usage has changed. That's why you always have to be cognizant of that and watching your monthly usage to ensure that at the end of the year you don't get hit with a big bill or a surprise.

The flip side is that if you've got a family of four, and three of them all go away to university at the same time, you just got rid of three teenagers who use a lot of water, lots of showers and baths, lots of laundry. You know what? Your bill might go down. You might get a good surprise at the end of the year because you might be getting a credit.

That's the point I'm trying to make: that what we have today often is the case of a flat-rate contract. I don't believe your bill will do anything where someone has signed a flat-rate contract with an energy retailer, because it only speaks—and one thing about laws: You can't assume anything. It says "fixed-rate" contract. It doesn't say "flat-rate" contract, so I think you may need to amend that when it gets to committee if you're going to deal with all electricity retail contracts. Or that's something the government may consider, should this get to committee.

The reality is that the government has brought out their own bill. Ironically, this is Bill 111; the government brought out Bill 112. Bill 112, which was introduced the same day, right on the heels of the member from Kenora-Rainy River, whose name I cannot use but everybody knows it—right on the heels of Bill 111 was Bill 112.

1410

Now Bill 112, interestingly enough, is going to ban the practice of selling—not marketing a contract door to door, but selling a contract door to door, because that is indeed where the rub is, folks: where that person signs that contract at the door. That's where the pressure is: "No, no, no. If you really want to take advantage of the special we're offering you today, Mr. member from Scarborough-Rouge River who does not have a name, you must sign it today, and you'll really prosper because you're going to save a lot of money." Well, the government's bill won't let you do that. You won't be able to sign that contract at the door, and even any contract that you do sign will have a 20-day cooling-off period as opposed to a 10-day period. So it'll be interesting when the government brings that bill forward for debate.

I have so much more to talk about. I'm glad that none of my colleagues butted in on me and wanted to speak.

They said, "Oh, Yak, we're going to give you the whole 12 minutes if you will take it." I shall thank you very much, because there's so much to talk about this that I will use all the time.

We'll be waiting for that vote. We're going to support the measure, but we have severe reservations.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. I now recognize the member for Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: It certainly helps that the member says that he took all of the time because they shared it. It also helps that he happens to be the chief whip for his party, and I'm sure if he wanted the time, he would just take it.

I just want to say before I start out that we have with us in the members' gallery Rosario Marchese, the former member from Trinity–Spadina. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that we would like to have a unanimous consent motion to give Rosario five minutes to give another speech in the House. Unanimous consent, anybody?

Interjection: Yes.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Yes.

Interjections.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: What do you mean, no? Oh, you guys aren't fun. I can tell you, the former member from Trinity–Spadina—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Stop the clock for a second. It's not to cut the member off, but it's the Speaker's privilege to recognize former members. So I'd like to recognize the former member for Trinity–Spadina, originally Fort York, Mr. Rosario Marchese, in the 35th and 36th Parliaments for Fort York and the 37th, 38th, 39th and 40th Parliaments for Trinity–Spadina. Welcome.

I now recognize the member for Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, Mr. Speaker, I and my good friend Rosario, as I call him, were elected, along with Mr. Arnott and Mr. Wilson, in the same Parliament. We came here in 1990. I sure wish you were still here, Rosario. I miss you each and every day.

This is an opportunity in this debate to talk about what has gone wrong in our energy sector, specifically electricity, and to speak specifically on the bill from the member from Kenora–Rainy River, because she's right. There is a problem in this province when it comes to people coming and knocking on your door and saying, "Hey, trust me. We've got this great deal. All you've got to do is sign up over here, and we're going to save you lots and lots of money."

We all as members around here have had those same poor citizens who sign these contracts with either energy marketers for gas or electricity come to our constituency offices to do what? "I can't afford to pay this bill. It's gone through the roof." We as members—all of us on all sides of the House—have contacted the company in question and have done the work that we have to do as members in order to get people out of these deals. Why? Because a lot of times, they're very bad deals.

We pay enough for electricity in this province since the Liberals privatized part of the generation side, which

has raised electricity rates by 320% since they've come to office. Can you imagine that? Your record, since coming to office for some 12 years, is that you can boast that electricity rates in Ontario have gone up 320% as a result of your own government's move to privatize. I would say, about 30% of the generation side of hydro. Now this government says, "Hey, we want to sell off 60% of the distribution and transmission side." If it went up by 320%, oh my God, it's going to go up even beyond that. I've got to say, if that's the legacy and the record of this government, we can't take no more, because we can let alone pay the regular hydro bills without having to deal with energy marketers who come to knock at our door and say, "We're going to sell you electricity at a good price," where it actually turns out to be a higher price than would be the high price that we pay today—under Ontario Hydro's billing system that the Liberals have allowed rates to go up 320%.

But the government has an answer. It says, "You know what? You want to save electricity? You can cook at 2 o'clock in the morning. You can get up. You can do your laundry at 2 o'clock in the morning. You can heat your house at 2 o'clock in the morning. But don't do those kinds of things during the peak times"—which happens to be when? When you're normally in your house having to do those things. Because you get home at 5 o'clock. It's cold in the winter because it's dark. The heat has to go on. You've got to wash the kids' clothes, and you've got to cook the food. You've got to do it at peak times, because this government has got this silly system in place that has very little to do with conservation and has more to do with whacking you in the pocket-book when it comes to what it's going to cost you to pay for electricity.

So, yeah, the member from Kenora–Rainy River comes to this Legislature and says that we need to do at least this in order to try to protect consumers so that we don't have energy rates going through the roof when it comes to what energy marketers can do to electricity bills or gas bills, when it comes to them signing at the door.

I want to say something about the member from—I'm doing a Rosario now; you realize that. I want to say something about the member from—the whip. What's his riding, Speaker?

Interjections.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Mississauga–Streetsville. That's why I will never be the Speaker: because I never know the ridings.

The member from Mississauga–Streetsville, the chief government whip, says, "Well, you shouldn't let anybody come and knock at your door, because what they're selling probably ain't good." Well, you'd better not go back and knock on doors in your election next time around, because, God almighty, you've been knocking on doors along with us and all the members of this assembly for a number of years, and you're suggesting there are certain people who shouldn't knock on doors. I think you should look in the mirror.

When you go in the next election and you go knocking on doors, you should remind them that, as of this day,

electricity rates have gone up 320% as a result of the actions of your government. In three years' time, when we go back again and you go knock, knock, knock, people are going to be yelling at the door, because it ain't going to be 320%; it will be substantially more than that. I'm sure that you're going to remind each and every person in Mississauga–Streetsville that your government's record, when it comes to the price of electricity going through the roof, has led to people not being able to pay their bill.

Certainly, we're going to support the member from Kenora–Rainy River's bill. Why? Because we need to do all that we can in order to be able to protect consumers in this province from the policies of this awful, awful Liberal government.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: A point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): A point of order from—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: A point of order, Mr. Speaker. I'm the member from Parkdale–High Park, by the way, just so you know.

I just wanted to introduce some of the luminaries who are over here. We've got Fred Hahn from CUPE. We've got Smokey Thomas from OPSEU. We've got these fabulous city councillors, Gord Perks and Janet Davis. Welcome—and to everyone else as well.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I remind the member that that's not a point of order. If you wish to introduce guests, you have to do it out of your speaking time.

Further debate?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: It's my pleasure to stand in the House today and speak to Bill 111, the Ending Predatory Electricity Retailing Act, 2015. I'd like to thank the member from Kenora–Rainy River for tabling this bill in the Legislature and for starting this conversation, and add my voice to the members opposite and congratulate my colleague on the birth of her new child, her new daughter. What a blessing. Congratulations to you. I'm very happy for you. I look forward to photographs; I haven't seen any. I'd love to see some.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Paisley is beautiful.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Yes. Like her mother, I might add.

Mr. Speaker, protecting the vulnerable segments of our society is of utmost importance. Not only is it the right thing to do; it also makes economic sense. When vulnerable members of our communities, particularly seniors, are taken advantage of, nobody wins.

I'm particularly sensitive to this issue as, in my riding of Burlington, one in five residents is a senior citizen. Protecting them and ensuring that they are not forced to spend larger portions of their income on these types of fixed contracts will ensure that they are able to live comfortably and with dignity in their retirement.

This bill would eliminate entirely any and all fixed rate electricity contracts between retailers and consumers

in the future. It will also allow consumers to seek compensation if they are billed under an existing contract after it has been deemed void by the legislation.

1420

While protecting Ontario's energy consumers is one of our government's top priorities, an outright ban on all fixed-rate contracts may not be the best way of achieving the desired outcome. There will undoubtedly be a portion of consumers who want to enter into fixed-rate contracts, and denying them this choice because some contracts attempt to take advantage fails to address the underlying issue.

The Minister of Energy has proposed legislation that would enhance consumer protection by banning door-to-door sales while still allowing consumers to engage in fixed-rate contracts should they so choose. Our government believes that making sure consumers have all the information required to make an educated decision on their energy purchases is the way to go.

Since the Energy Consumer Protection Act was implemented in 2011, consumer complaints registered with the Ontario Energy Board against energy retailers have dropped dramatically, from 6,013 in 2008 to 797 in 2014. This demonstrates that the protections put in place by our government are having the intended positive effect, protecting consumers from contracts that seek to take advantage. It also serves to protect them against unscrupulous door-to-door salespeople.

This does not mean that our work is done. In fact, the Minister of Energy has proposed amendments to the ECPA that would provide further protection to consumers in Ontario. These changes would allow Ontarians to make more informed choices about where they get their energy.

That being said, I agree with the spirit of this bill, Speaker. Any legislation that would grant further protections to the vulnerable in Ontario, including seniors, is something that we must seriously consider. I do feel, however, that some changes need to be made to this particular proposal to ensure that it does not, in its pursuit to provide consumer protections, have the added effect of removing choice from the marketplace.

To say that all fixed-rate energy contracts are bad is to oversimplify the problem. It is true that there are many energy retailers that have overcharged users or coerced consumers into unfair contracts with confusing language and a lack of useful information, but there are others who offer legitimate contracts to consumers who are able to make informed choices.

By delving further into this complex issue, there may be a solution that will help to address all aspects of this problem. I look forward to exploring those possibilities.

I will be supporting this bill and encourage all of my colleagues here in the House to do the same. I again thank the member opposite for introducing this bill in the Legislature and, again, for facilitating this conversation. I look forward to further conversation in committee and further debate on this issue.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Ms. Cindy Forster: I want to thank the member from Kenora–Rainy River for bringing forward this bill and for actually coming back to visit with us—and her new daughter, who we were all excited to see.

This whole consumer protection thing is even bigger than Bill 111. I know, in my own constituency office, the numbers of people complaining about energy contracts have gone down; they are still there. But the number of people complaining about the other consumer protection door-to-door issues is increasing. Every week in my constituency office—I have a constituency assistant. His name is Mike Haines. He is a pit bull on these issues. But I have people coming into the office every week being sold furnaces, air conditioners, water softeners, heat pumps. These things are being sold to people who are 80 years old, with a 15- or 20-year contract—an \$11,000 furnace and air conditioner, for example, that they could have gone down to Sears and bought and had installed for about \$7,000. Immediately, they're paying \$4,000 more because they got it sold to them at the door, and then they are finding out a month, sometimes two months, later that in fact their contract then got sold to the finance company, and in addition to the \$11,000 they're now paying for this furnace, they are paying another \$13,000 in interest. So it's \$25,000 for a furnace and air conditioner over the next 180 months. Some of these people will be deceased before these contracts are ever finished.

Many of them talk about the unscrupulous people at the door who are pushy, overbearing, push themselves into their house, tell them that they're getting a good deal—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Sounds like the member from Mississauga–Streetsville.

Ms. Cindy Forster: Exactly. But at the end of the day, they're not getting a good deal.

Back in 2013 there was a government bill on consumer protection. We tried to make some amendments that would have improved some of these practices, but we were unable to be successful in getting those moved forward.

Ontarians are getting ripped off in this process. I mean, how do you buy a hot water tank that you could buy for \$800 and end up paying for it for the next 20 years at 30 bucks a month? You end up paying \$3,000 or \$4,000 for a hot water tank that was worth 800 bucks, tops, installed. There's something drastically wrong about that.

The member from Timmins–James Bay talked about the increase in hydro rates. That is a real problem in the north, where they have a lot of hydroelectricity: a 320% increase over the last 15 years, 13 years—however long the Liberals have been here—another proposed 46% increase in hydro rates in this province over the next five years and then a 60% Hydro One sell-off. Well, shareholders in every sector want to get some return on their investment. They're going to be looking for an 8% to

10% return on their investment, so how could the hydro rates not possibly go up when you're actually going to sell off 60% of the shares?

Somebody talked about consumer protection. It will be gone completely with this hydro sell-off. We'll have no Ombudsman oversight. We know that the current Ombudsman had—I don't know—81,000 complaints over hydro bills. But there will be no oversight from the Ombudsman; there will be no oversight from the Integrity Commissioner; there will be no oversight from the Auditor General. You talk about bringing in Bill 112, which will improve consumer protection, at the same time that you're going to do a major hydro sell-off in the province of Ontario.

I have letters from at least a dozen of my constituents in Welland riding, and I'm sure that many of the MPPs who are here today—

Mr. Arthur Potts: We're all here.

Ms. Cindy Forster: Well, you're not all here.

Many of our constituents come into our offices every week, and I can tell you that my staff spends the vast majority of their time dealing with these kinds of contracts. I think the government, when they're moving forward with Bill 112, needs to put in better consumer protection to make sure that the people in this province who can least afford it—I have one example here where these people signed this contract. The person selling the contract never put the final figures on the bill they actually received. Two months later—so, after that 10-day cooling-off period—they actually got the contract in writing from the finance company, only to find that they were paying 13% interest.

When we investigated this complaint, what we got from the company that actually sold them the furnace and the air conditioner was, "Well, we put them into our second-look program," without telling them. They didn't qualify for a lower rate of interest, but nobody picked up the phone and told these people, "You're not going to be paying 5% interest over the next 25 years; you're actually going to be paying 13%, because we just chose to move you into this higher-rate finance company, and at the end of the day you're going to be paying \$30,000 for a furnace and an air conditioner that you could have bought somewhere else for \$6,000."

Thank you to the member from Kenora–Rainy River for looking after Ontarians and our province.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Please let me also acknowledge the member from Kenora–Rainy River and her new family. I had the delight of meeting little Paisley yesterday, and it was the best part of my day, getting to see your beautiful little girl. Thank you for bringing her to the Legislature and giving that beautiful moment to all of us.

I also want to commend the member from Kenora–Rainy River for bringing forward her private member's bill, the Ending Predatory Electricity Retailing Act. I know that the purpose of the bill is to amend the Energy

Consumer Protection Act, 2010—the ECPA—to eliminate fixed-rate electricity contracts between retailers and consumers.

1430

I think it's important because, as the MPP from Kenora–Rainy River has noted in the past, she really believes that some private energy retailers employ dishonest practices to take advantage of vulnerable consumers, notably seniors, in order to have them sign up for fixed-rate contracts that provide poor value relative to market rates for electricity.

Again, I echo the member from Burlington and others around here who really want to ensure that our seniors in particular, and other vulnerable citizens at home, are protected from these kinds of practices that are not transparent in their dealings with these vulnerable citizens.

As a former care co-ordinator for CCAC, I know that in my office, we were always on the lookout for these types of unscrupulous business dealers that perhaps were not giving the best story to the individuals at home and were taking advantage of them.

I also am proud of a government, too, that recognizes that the protection of Ontario's energy consumers is a top priority. That's why we introduced the Energy Consumer Protection Act in 2010. Under these rules, the ECPA ensures that energy consumers are receiving accurate information from energy retailers before entering into or renewing a contract, and it gives consumers greater ability to cancel their contract, and I think this is really key.

This government is also committed to ensuring that all Ontarians are aware of their rights, as energy consumers, when dealing with electricity retailers and gas marketers, especially at the door.

The Ontario Energy Board is responsible for ensuring that retailers comply with the ECPA, and it is taking the necessary steps to hold electricity retailers and gas marketers who have failed to comply with the legal or regulatory requirements of accountability.

The OEB recently completed a review of the ECPA and submitted a report, *Consumers Come First*, to the minister, with recommendations to further strengthen the effectiveness of the ECPA.

The Minister of Energy has proposed legislation that, if passed, would enhance protection for consumers who sign retail energy contracts, by banning door-to-door sales of retail electricity and gas contracts; doubling the cooling-off period from 10 days to 20 days; and requiring that all contracts are subject to a verification process.

Speaker, I really did want to point out that that cooling-off period would also be consistent with the current 20-day cooling-off period for hot water heater rental contracts, under the Consumer Protection Act, 2002. I certainly think that compliance with this is going to enhance consumer protection at the door. I know that the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services was consulted on the proposed amendments, and they also agreed with this cooling-off period.

In closing, Speaker, I know that the Ministry of Energy is doing some work, and I acknowledge that, but I also support—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much. I thank everyone for their comments.

I now return to the member for Kenora–Rainy River. You have two minutes for your reply.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Thank you to the members of this House who took the time to weigh in on this bill.

I wanted to make two comments. First of all, I wanted to respond to some of the comments that were made by the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke when he talked about how some electricity retailers are offering flat rates. I wasn't really sure if he was talking about that as a positive thing or a negative thing. It almost sounded like he was saying that was positive.

But I wanted to draw to the member's attention that such a thing exists with our public option through Hydro One, and that's equal billing. For anybody in this province who might be worried about having high bills and low bills at certain times of the year, they're certainly welcome to talk to Hydro One and to enrol in that kind of thing, which can help insulate people, especially northerners, from some of those hot and cold months that we can have.

Secondly, I wanted to address Bill 112. That's the bill that the Liberals introduced, right after my bill, which would ban electricity retailer contracts from being sold door to door. My response to that is that retailers will find a way.

I remember when I worked in a constituency office; I had a steady stream of folks who, through one way or another, found themselves enrolled in some of these really awful contracts. They thought they were finally done. Their contract was up, and they received this little cheque in the mail that had marketed itself in such a way that it seemed like it was a return for being such a good customer: "Here, we've actually overcharged you." So they went promptly to the bank, cashed these things and in fine print on the back it said, "By cashing this cheque, you agree to re-enter into another contract at such and such a rate." Boom; they're suckered again.

I want to say that we have had years and years of government after government trying to regulate these things, and nothing works. They will always find a way. I think the only way that we can get rid of these guys is to ban them completely, and I'm asking people to do that today.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We will take the vote on this item at the end of private members' business.

LISTENING TO ONTARIANS ACT (HYDRO ONE AND OTHER ELECTRICITY ASSETS), 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA NÉCESSITÉ D'ÊTRE À L'ÉCOUTE DES ONTARIENS (HYDRO ONE ET AUTRES ÉLÉMENTS D'ACTIF LIÉS À L'ÉLECTRICITÉ)

Ms. Horwath moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 107, An Act to require a referendum before the disposition of the Crown's electricity assets / Projet de loi 107, Loi exigeant la tenue d'un référendum préalable à la disposition des éléments d'actif de la Couronne liés à l'électricité.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I'm honoured to be able to rise today to speak on behalf of the Ontario NDP caucus in favour of our bill to call for a referendum on the sale of Hydro One.

I'm also proud that we've had some people joining us here in the galleries, because not only am I speaking on behalf of the NDP caucus in regard to a referendum for Hydro One's sell-off; I'm also talking and speaking on behalf of not only the scores and scores of people who have joined us this afternoon but literally tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of Ontarians who think this is absolutely the wrong direction for the province of Ontario.

Speaker, it's not just New Democrats who feel this way. You may know that I have been travelling this province, working with a number of other interested parties. In fact, we have a number of leaders in our communities who are here today. We have some city councillors. We have some school board trustees. I see Gord Perks is here. Janet Davis is here from the city of Toronto. Alex Felsky is here from the city of Brantford. She's a school board trustee there. We've got union leaders here. We have Smokey Thomas here—the president of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union. We have Fred Hahn here—the president of CUPE Ontario. There are many other labour leaders, many other community leaders and many other elected people. In fact, you'll know that municipalities across this province are sending correspondence, first of all, through resolutions through their council tables and then correspondence to this Premier and her government to stop this wrong-headed sale of Hydro One.

The problem we have, of course, is that the Premier is ignoring the voices of these Ontarians. The Premier has shut down any discussion whatsoever of this very important issue, and it's not just a very important issue. I believe fundamentally that this is one of the biggest, most monumental shifts in public policy that this province has seen in a generation, and yet not a single Ontarian has had their voice heard in regard to whether or not they agree with this Liberal government's behaviour, with this Liberal government's actions, and that is unacceptable.

We were just at the polls a year ago, and not one, single Liberal, including the Premier herself, was up front with Ontarians. Not one, single Liberal backbencher, cabinet minister or the Premier herself was up front with the people of Ontario about their intention to sell off Hydro One. In fact, you may recall that the leader of that party, the Liberal Party, the woman who is the Premier of this province, stood in that seat right over

there in October of last year, months after the last election—and it's in Hansard; it's on the public record—and she looked me in the eye, she looked every single MPP on all sides of the House in the eye, and said she was not going to be selling off the assets of Ontario. What a disgrace, because here we are, a couple of months later, and lo and behold, one of the most important assets is on the auction block. It's a disgrace.

1440

I said that I've been talking to a lot of people all around this province, and I certainly have. And I have to tell you, not a single person has told me that they think this is a good idea. Thousands upon thousands upon thousands have told me they think it is a very bad idea. The response that I get from people ranges from absolute distrust of the Liberals, absolute anger on the one hand—they're distrustful because they weren't told the truth by the government; they are angry because they feel frustrated that the government has shut them down and not listened to them—and then, on the other side of the spectrum, people have a deep, deep, deep sense of disappointment in Kathleen Wynne, the Premier of Ontario, who said she was going to do things differently in Ontario; she was going to govern differently. She's not doing anything differently.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Same old.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: She's doing the same old thing that the Liberals do when they have power, which is talk to a small group of their most powerful friends and decide what's best for them. When it comes to listening to the people of Ontario, well, the ears are closed; the mind is closed. It's all about the small group of insiders, of close friends, of people who are going to benefit and profit from this kind of action.

I'm saying that because we know what will happen with the sell-off of Hydro One. We've seen this movie many, many times before. We saw it right here in Ontario when the Harris and Eves government decided they were going to start selling off some of our hydro generation. That was in the early 2000s. What happened? Almost overnight, electricity rates in this province went up by 25%—almost overnight.

Every single family that I've talked to for years now—not just on this issue, but for years now—has been ruing the fact that they are falling behind. They can't pay the bills. They can't afford the pressures of day-to-day life. They're already struggling to pay their electricity bills.

I was in Brantford recently. There was a woman who literally broke down in tears because she firmly believes that any further increase in her electricity bill is going to literally have her and her husband out on the streets, without being able to afford a roof over their heads anymore.

I was in Kingston recently and I heard from a family in a co-op who said that one of their neighbours literally lived the entire winter in one room of their house, because they are heated by electricity and they could not afford to heat the other rooms of their house. An entire family in Kingston lived in one room in their townhouse

in the co-op because they couldn't afford their electricity. What are they going to do next year or the year after, when the Liberals have privatized our electricity system? How are they going to be able to afford the bills then?

That's what we're facing here. We're facing a crisis already in the cost of electricity. Now we're going to see it go even further. The rates are one issue. But it's more than just that. It's more than just the rates. If this sell-off of Hydro One goes forward, we are going to have a situation where the interest of this corporation is not going to be the public interest. Every decision being made by that corporation is going to be made in the interests of the shareholders, not of the public.

That is why another historic thing happened here in the province of Ontario when virtually every single watchdog the people of Ontario have—the Ombudsman, the Auditor General, the Financial Accountability Officer, the French Language Services Commissioner, the child advocate, the Information and Privacy Commissioner, all of these watchdogs—jointly signed a letter to say that this is the wrong thing for Ontario because all of the oversight and all of the accountability will be gone. In fact, it is gone, because the Liberals passed their budget yesterday. Now, today, none of the watchdogs that look after the public interest are able to ever again look into what's happening at Hydro, and we know that those watchdogs have done a great job.

So there's a complete lack of oversight, a complete lack of accountability. We have rates going through the roof. We have a system that we cannot confirm will continue to be reliable for the people of Ontario, because who knows what the interest is of the companies and of the shareholders when it comes to the running of our hydro system? It might be better off for them to allow for electricity, for example, to not be as reliable. We saw that in California. We saw rolling brownouts in California when they privatized their electricity system. Why? Because it was in the corporate interest to allow that to happen. It wasn't in the public interest, though.

So we're really concerned about reliability and we're concerned about safety. That's one of the things we're concerned about.

But we also know that our electricity system, our transmission system, our Hydro One, can be utilized for other goals as well. It can be utilized to help us with conservation. It can be utilized to help us with other goals around the green economy. It can help us with economic development goals. But that's only if it's operated in the public interest, because those other activities are things that we want to incur and we want to embark on on behalf of the people of Ontario, on behalf of making our province a better place for everyone.

So the rates are going to skyrocket. We don't know what's happening with the reliability. We're losing an asset that helps us a great deal in terms of other economic opportunities. There is no reason for us to go down this road. The Premier likes to put a false choice in front of people—a false choice, I say. She keeps telling people that the only way that we can actually invest in things

like infrastructure and transit is by selling off our biggest asset, one of our most important assets.

That's the other thing. This asset generates for us right now hundreds upon hundreds upon hundreds of millions of dollars each and every year into our revenue stream. That goes to pay for education. That's used to pay for health care and for infrastructure. But guess what? We are not going to be getting that money anymore, because that money is going to be used as a payoff to the shareholders that are investing. It's all about return on investment for shareholders once it's a private corporation. It's not about revenue for the people of Ontario.

But you know what? In this province, this is the first time in our history, since Sir Adam Beck plugged in Niagara Falls, that there has been a Premier who has not been able to figure out how to maintain a public electricity system that's in the best interests of the people while at the same time investing in infrastructure and in transit—the first time ever. How shameful. What a lovely legacy for the Premier of Ontario.

She's putting a false choice in front of Ontarians. There are lots of other ways to find revenues. This government has wasted billions and billions. I know my colleagues are going to talk about that. We have in this province a corporate tax rate that is lower than that of Alabama. So let's start talking about the real choices and not put false choices in front of the people of Ontario.

Interruption.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Sit down, please. Sit down, please. Sergeant-at-Arms, can we clear the gallery?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I remind our guests that we welcome you here to witness the proceedings, but do not participate.

Further debate?

1450

Hon. Charles Sousa: I appreciate the opportunity to highlight our responsible plan to utilize Ontario's assets in a way that creates important value for average Ontarians, and helps fund important infrastructure projects as well, by moving on those crucial transit investments.

It was the member opposite who herself had the same plan in her platform during the last election—

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Not true.

Hon. Charles Sousa: She even said, in an interview on May 7, "There's no doubt we did talk in our platform about looking at some of the physical assets that the province owns. I mean, you can never be closed-minded about that."

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Stop the clock.

I would ask the member for Hamilton Centre to come to order. You had your opportunity; the House was very quiet. I would expect other speakers to get the same.

Continue.

Hon. Charles Sousa: I appreciate that interjection, because the member opposite said, "I mean, you can

never be closed-minded about that"—about the very issue we're talking about today.

Our government is doing what is necessary in making the single largest infrastructure investment in Ontario's history: \$130 billion over 10 years. This is why a key part of our platform in 2014 was to maximize the value of our assets. We ran on maximizing those values and re-investing those funds in our vital long-term infrastructure needs. The people of Ontario endorsed our plan, and we're now delivering on that commitment.

Our government has been clear that we will broaden the ownership of Hydro One and protect ratepayers.

We'll retain considerable influence over how Hydro One's finances are managed: "Hydro One will become a large multi-billion-dollar public-private mixed enterprise with substantial control imposed by the Ontario government." That was Jack Mintz of the National Post on April 21, 2014.

Ontario will remain the largest shareholder of Hydro One and will nominate the key directors of the board. A two-thirds board vote will be required on major decisions, and we'll have the power to unilaterally dismiss the board.

We'll also introduce legislation which would mean that the government cannot sell less than 40% of Hydro One shares, while no other shareholder would be allowed to own more than 10%. Here's another quote: "That should alleviate any fears of an aggressive buyer leveraging up the company," says Julian Pope, head of credit trading and sales with Desjardins.

Furthermore, we will look to set side stocks for individual investors. Elliot Fishman, director of US and international trading with ScotiaMcLeod, says that the decision to set stock aside for retail investors—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Could the member for Hamilton Mountain come to order.

Hon. Charles Sousa:—"is a smart move as it gets the securities into 'safer hands.'"

Another factor is this: All of Hydro One's officers would be required to reside in Ontario, and the Ontario grid control centre and head office would be required to be maintained in Ontario.

Hydro One would be prohibited from selling other transmission or distribution businesses or assets, because those are regulated by the Ontario Energy Board. And note, Mr. Speaker, that Hydro One would not have the power to set its own rates. They will continue to be set by an independent OEB.

The crux of the matter is creating greater value for Hydro One and other public assets. Just in the Hamilton region alone, we'll invest \$13.5 billion over 10 years and increase weekly GO rail trips from 1,500 to 6,000.

We pledged to support SmartTrack; we pledged funding for Hamilton RT; we pledged \$1.6 billion for the new Hurontario-Main LRT.

Unlocking the value in our assets will also allow us to invest \$1 billion in the Ring of Fire, \$230 million for rural and northern natural gas expansion, \$15 million

annually for the new Connecting Links program, \$100 million for the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund and \$272 million for the Small Communities Fund. Furthermore, unlocking the value of assets allows for unprecedented investments in other types of infrastructure across the province. That \$130 billion goes toward bridges, roads, transit, hospitals and schools.

The thing is this, Mr. Speaker: The third party, frankly, has no plan at all. The NDP know this is a good plan, because they based their nine-page platform on our fiscal plan, including maximizing the value of our assets. Now they oppose our prudent plan to build infrastructure and transit that Ontarians need. The NDP has no plan, no idea when it comes to the economy or job creation. Because of this, they have no faith in the private sector. By opposing this plan, they would have Ontarians sitting in gridlock rather than being home with their families.

I understand that the leader of the third party will be touring the province. That's great. Well, I hope she comes clean to Ontarians about what projects they would cancel. Would it be delivering 15-minute service from Union Station to Bramalea? Would they cancel the northern Ontario highway projects?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Would the member from London West and the member from Hamilton come to order? Member for Hamilton Mountain, this is the second time.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Would they end the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund? We're forthcoming with our plan and how we plan to pay for it. The NDP like to point to their proposed corporate tax hikes, but that money wouldn't be available for infrastructure, because the NDP has already allocated their revenues to their other commitments. These tax hikes themselves would do damage to Ontario's economic recovery and growth. Ontario is currently, by the way, the top destination in all of North America for foreign direct investment because of our dynamic and competitive business climate.

Mr. Speaker, we have been open and transparent about our plan to maximize the value of our assets. We disclosed that in our 2014 budget. We disclosed it in our 2014 platform—which, by the way, the NDP and the PCs endorsed in their own platforms. We reintroduced that platform and that budget in 2014 a second time. We included it in our economic statement in the fall. Then we reintroduced it in the 2015 budget, with many discussions around the province, including the people of Ontario especially. We actually even did two reports from the advisory council on this very issue.

This will provide Ontario with a strong public corporation. It will enhance that value, and we will be able to reinvest that for the people of Ontario to enhance even greater value overall.

The Leader of the Opposition is playing political games. They know that full well. They had it in their platform. Now they're double-speaking and basically saying to the people of Ontario that they would have

done it; now they say they won't. Mr. Speaker, that is not being clean.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would ask the Minister of Finance to withdraw.

Hon. Charles Sousa: All right. I withdraw, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate.

Mr. John Yakabuski: It's a pleasure to join the debate today on Bill 107, calling for a referendum—An Act to require a referendum before the disposition of the Crown's electricity assets. I've got to tell you straight out front that a referendum is not the way that I'd like to be dealing with this. But I have to tell you, we've tried an awful lot of other ways since the government announced their plan to dispose of Hydro One—or at least, I should say, 60% of Hydro One. We've tried in various ways to convince them that this is the wrong way to go and the wrong reasons for doing it.

The reality exists—the leader of the third party touched on that—that if you had managed this province properly, if you had planned properly, if you had managed the economy, if you had managed the budget, you wouldn't be selling assets to pay for infrastructure. You'd be doing it the same way that everyone else did over the decades, and that is by managing the province's finances. But these people have failed.

Interjections.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I know the minister is all upset because maybe he's not selling enough tickets to Pan Am—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I say to the members on the government side that I would expect the same respect for the person speaking in the opposition.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Durham, if you're going to continue to heckle, I'd ask you to take your seat.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pardon me for one second. I'd like to apologize to the member for London West. I meant for the member for Windsor West to come to order.

Now I recognize the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke again.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that intervention, because all the time while the minister was speaking, you never heard a peep out of me, which is the way I try to perform in this House as much as possible.

But yes, if the government had managed affairs properly, we wouldn't be talking about selling Hydro One.

1500

They're not selling Hydro One because they have some philosophical belief that they need to rid themselves of assets. No, they're desperate for cash and the minister knows it. They know that the only way they're even going to have a ghost of a chance of balancing the

budget by 2017-18 is to try something different because they don't have the wherewithal or the willingness to make the fiscal decisions to get there by managing the finances of the province on their own. So they're going to have a fire sale and here they're starting with one of our biggest assets, and that's Hydro One.

We've told them from the start that this is the wrong idea, but I'm not sure why the minister would listen to me.

Hon. Charles Sousa: You're a good guy.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Well, I try to be, and I try to be helpful.

But surely the minister would want to listen to the member from St. Catharines when he was asked about the sale of Hydro One, the Minister without Portfolio, the deputy government House leader and a man who has been here longer than—my God, he's been here since Moby Dick was a minnow, as they say—Jim—oh, I can't say his name—the member for St. Catharines: “I think anyone who looks objectively at Hydro One, the transmission grid in this province, would recognize that it would naturally be something that is best kept in public ownership and public hands.”

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Jim, what happened?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, but he wasn't the only one. He wasn't the only current cabinet minister. I have a quote here from the Minister of Agriculture, the sitting member from Peterborough. He said, “We've been pretty clear: We'll keep Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One in the public's hands, as they should be....”

Interjections.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, but wait, wait. There's more.

Interjection: There's more?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes.

The member from York West and the minister responsible for seniors: “There is nothing the public of Ontario ... will benefit from with the sale of Hydro One.... That is why we should try to protect this wonderful facility which, if sold, will not come back into the hands of the people of Ontario anymore.”

Is he right or is he wrong?

Interjection: Have you got more, John?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, I have more. Then there are former members. I've got more quotes here than Carter has pills, I'm telling you. How about former Premier Dalton McGuinty?

“The sale of the grid that carries electricity to their [families'] homes is a disaster for consumers.”

“Stop the sale of Hydro One, at least until the people have their say in an election.”

“Families know that selling Hydro One and Ontario's power grid is just plain wrong.”

“Selling off this valuable public asset is something the public should be consulted with in an election. Take it to working families and let them have their say.”

But Dalton had more to say: “Let the people decide the future of hydro and the future of Ontario in a general

election,” and he said the government is “poised to sell off Hydro One in a desperate bid to get cash.”

Interjections.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, yes he did; yes, he did. But how about my predecessor, Sean Conway, from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, who sat here for 28 years—

Mr. Grant Crack: He should have stayed.

Mr. John Yakabuski: But he couldn't because he had to free up the spot for me. He probably regrets that decision, eh?

Sean Conway, Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke and energy critic—and this was when they were thinking of selling off Hydro One in the past—said, “The Tory government has no mandate to sell off the grid and there has been no [public] consultation [or debate] about such a sale.... The transmission grid—located in the heart of North America—is one of Ontario's most valuable assets. It is unbelievable that it is being sold without any discussion or debate.”

Or how about this one: “Selling the crown jewel of our electricity system is a very serious mistake. Let the voters decide the future of Hydro One”?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Kathleen Wynne.

Mr. John Yakabuski: No, that's still Sean.

“The grid is a natural monopoly, is one of the province's most valuable assets, and ... it should stay in public hands.”

Or this one—you could be making these quotes. They could probably be yours, as well, but they're Sean Conway. “At no time ... did [they] ... campaign on the sale of the transmission grid and therefore they have no mandate from the people to proceed with the sale.”

Mr. Gilles Bisson: But Yak, he was talking about you.

Mr. John Yakabuski: We're doing good here, Gilles. Be quiet.

He's talking to the Premier of the time. He says, “Drop” your “ill-conceived plans to sell off our transmission grid or he”—meaning Eves—“will delay any decisions on the grid until after the next provincial election.”

“The Ontario Liberals believe that the only meaningful”—

Mr. Paul Miller: Have you got a quote from Mike Harris?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Paul. Paul.

“The Ontario Liberals believe that the only meaningful consultation on this sale would be the one that takes place during a provincial election campaign.”

“Even those who are not opposed to the sale of Hydro One were unable to show us a business case that justifies the sale of the grid. They can't show us because it doesn't exist.”

“Ontario Liberals have argued that putting the transmission grid in private hands will weaken regulation ... and that it should remain a public responsibility so that the government can safeguard its security.”

“Liberals stand squarely on the side of keeping the transmission grid in public hands.”

Applause.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, no, no, no. Thank you very much, but I'm not a Liberal. These are actually their words. I'm not doing a Liberal speech right now; I just want you to understand that.

Interjection.

Mr. John Yakabuski: No, Jim; don't get too upset. I am going through the chair.

Michael Bryant—do you remember former Attorney General Michael Bryant? And an energy critic: “Hawking Hydro One without an electoral mandate, and without even pretending to consult the public. This is an election issue.”

Gerry Phillips, a great member: “It's time for the Premier to step in and ensure that Hydro One management's vested interest is in the long-term, effective management of Hydro One, not in its sell-off.” He's a very reasonable man.

And how about Dwight Duncan? A little bit from Dwight Duncan here: “We do not believe it's in the province's interests, nor do I, to sell Hydro One. Hydro One is the nerve centre of our province. It's our power grid. It takes power from where it's generated to our retail suppliers in communities and it makes money.”

John Gerretsen, a member from Kingston and the Islands and holder of several portfolios.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I talked to him the other day. He still has the same opinion, I bet you.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, my, John Gerretsen. I think he said this to us: “They may very well use it in order to balance their budget in this year and the next. For us to sell one of the main assets in the province of Ontario for that purpose is absolute lunacy. It is an asset that's owned by the people of Ontario and should remain in the people's hands.”

Mr. Gilles Bisson: He was telling you that.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Never mind who he was talking about, Gilles. Gilles, I think there's a phone call for you in the lobby.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Let somebody else speak.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, no, they've mandated that I have to do 12 minutes. I'm doing my best. I'm almost out of time. No more time for quotes.

1510

Look, I think what I've been trying to point out here is clear. It's not whether or not we support the referendum tool; we agree and we have stated clearly that they're doing the wrong thing in the wrong way for the wrong reason. But what is even more clear is that they believe they're doing the wrong thing in the wrong way for the wrong reason, because if you look at what they've said for the past 12 years, everything they've said is against what they're doing today. And what they're doing today is exactly what John Gerretsen said: They're doing this because they're desperate for cash. Thank you, John Gerretsen, wherever you are. Come on down. We'll bring

you in today and maybe we'll get you five minutes on the floor, like we tried to get Rosie Marchese.

But that is what's going on with this government: They're desperate—desperate—for cash, and they're willing to sell off anything to get it. That's the wrong way for the wrong reason, and the people are—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. Further debate?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. Further debate?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Order.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Rosie, come on down.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Minister of Finance, I'm standing.

Member for Toronto—Danforth.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker, it's clear that Mr. Yakubski wasn't able to say his last few words, which were, "Repent, repent." He used the words of the Liberals that were used against the Tories the last time this crazy idea was put on the floor.

Speaker, everyone in this room knows that this government does not have the mandate to sell off Hydro One, to trigger a massive innovation of the electricity system in this province, unprecedented in the province's history.

Speaker, I went to hear the Minister of Finance at the Economic Club of Canada last April, and I heard him use the words, "We're going to sweat these assets." I heard him talk about maximizing the value. I saw him go through a speech that was crafted by lawyers and communications, working back and forth to make sure that it was not clear for the moment that they were going to privatize and sell off Hydro One—not there.

I have to say, I listened to his speech when he introduced the budget last year. Again, the words "privatize" and "sell off" were absent. Lots of wiggle words, but the clear intent of this government to sell off—privatization—has come later, notwithstanding their protestations that it's been clear from the beginning.

Speaker, through the last election I went to all candidates' meetings. I heard no Liberal say, "We're going to privatize Hydro One." I saw no literature saying, "We're going to sell it off. That's how we're going to pay for anything that our hearts desire." It wasn't there.

Last fall, the Premier ridiculed Andrea Horwath when she asked the question, "Are you going to sell it off?" "No, no. Big confusion. Not going to happen." Not true. Not true, Speaker.

A few days ago, the Minister of Energy was asked about this particular decision, given that it's very controversial, and he said, "You know, we brought in the HST and we got re-elected. So we got away with it." He didn't say, "We got away with it." That's my paraphrase, my accurate paraphrase of those remarks.

I'll remind the Liberals over there: When you came to the 2011 election, you were in trouble. You had to spend

a billion bucks relocating gas plants to make sure you got the seats you got. Your number of seats went down and you became a minority government. You were lucky. You blew the billion bucks; you got what you wanted. But I want to say to you: With this, you're going to be running out of Teflon. The tank will be empty, and you will become the Velcro party, and every piece of lint, every unpleasant piece of gum, every bit of pain that arises from this initiative will stick to you. When the lights go out, when the prices soar, it will stick to you.

When the mayors of Toronto, Ottawa, Oshawa and Kingston start to stand up in their councils and say, "We have to sell off our hydro utilities. Thank God, the Liberals made it possible by changing the law. They say we have to put money in for this infrastructure. We'll sell the hydro utilities. We'll have the cash," you will have made that possible—without a mandate, without the will and the support of the people.

This is very dangerous for Ontario—very dangerous for Ontario—and, I'll just add, very dangerous for you politically, but I know you'll do your best to spend whatever public money is necessary to get re-elected. It's just a very expensive way to go into an election.

Speaker, you don't sell your wiring so you can put in plumbing. You don't sell off the heritage of a century so that your books can look better. That's what this is all about.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Bob Delaney: Speaker, why do we need a referendum to tell us that our cities are choking on traffic? It takes me about 90 minutes to drive only about 43 kilometres to get here to Queen's Park, and I know all the back routes and the shortcuts. Finding some of the money to build transit to move people in Canada's wealth-creation epicentre through a partial sale of a government asset like Hydro One is what I ran on in 2014.

Last June 12, we had the referendum that the member suggests, and Ontarians spoke decisively. They said to their Legislature that we needed to break the gridlock deadlock, and they elected a majority government to do it.

In breaking that gridlock deadlock, good for Toronto Mayor John Tory: Instead of continuing the debate about a Scarborough LRT or a subway or more studies on the Gardiner Expressway, he gets the imperative of making a decision and sticking by the decisions that have been made.

Move on to the next step. That's what Ontario needs. That type of action is exactly what our party pledged in 2014 during the election. As a government, we meant what we said in last year's election, and we will do what we promised.

Our government built the Lisgar GO station in my area ahead of schedule and well within the budget. On Saturday, passengers will begin using the new Union Pearson Express, also completed within both budget and schedule. We can no longer look on transit as something that happens in fits and starts, a bit in one decade and then nothing until 10 or 15 years have elapsed.

I listened to the baffle-gab about the loss of control of Hydro One. Let me quote from a 2015 article I looked up in a US legal newsletter called Law360. It states, in part, "The definition of 'controlling party' always has been something of a moving target," said Bernard Black, a finance and law professor at Northwestern University.

"Back in 1988, the Chancery Court held that a 39% stake in Macmillan Inc. was enough to give a hostile buyer effective control. Seven years later, in a heavily litigated battle for Unitrin Inc., the court said 28% was not. So when it comes to stock ownership, somewhere between 28% and 39% is a fuzzy line that denotes control, moving with the facts specific to each case, Black said."

Ontario will retain 40% ownership. No other entity or person would own more than 10%, and it would take 67% of the shares in order to make structural changes. Clearly, Ontario will retain control of Hydro One with its 40%.

Hydro One is an entity that arguably will benefit from the rigours of the Ontario Securities Commission's disclosure, transparency and filing requirements.

We suggest to our MPP colleagues not to spend public money refighting last year's election based on a promise that Ontario has kept. As well, let's get on with building the transit we need to keep our people, our economy and our businesses moving.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: My friend Howard Hampton wrote the book on public power 12 years ago. I've been re-reading that book lately. It's a great history on how we got to the Hydro One of today. It's worth a read. I recommend it to the Liberals, especially the minister and the Premier.

Previous Premiers nurtured and grew our public power system in Ontario. They fought long and hard to keep it out of private hands. Premier James Whitney, back at the turn of the century—that's when we were just beginning to harness the hydroelectric power at Niagara Falls. When he took office in February 1905, he stated, "I say on behalf of the government, that the water power all over the country should not in the future be made the sport and prey of capitalists and shall not be treated as anything else but a valuable asset of the people of Ontario, whose trustees this government of the people are."

Whitney was such a great visionary and Premier, future generations named an entire legislative block in his honour. As a matter of fact, that's where the Premier and cabinet do a lot of their business. Imagine what the former Premier would be saying to this group had he the occasion to say so today, Speaker. It was Whitney who established the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario, the forerunner to today's Hydro One.

1520

A former mayor of London, Sir Adam Beck, was named as the first chair of that body. Together they fought some hard battles against those who felt privatiza-

tion was better than public power. But they believed in democracy, Speaker. They ran a referendum. They asked the voters of Ontario who would be using hydro power from Niagara Falls what they wanted: public or private power. That was on January 1, 1907. It was the most significant referendum in Ontario's history by a huge majority. Public power was chosen over private interest. Voters in Toronto, Hamilton, Brantford, Guelph, London, St. Thomas, Stratford, Waterloo and Woodstock, as well as in 10 other communities, made it really clear. They wanted public power then, just like the people of Ontario want public power now.

By 1913, in Ontario, more than three dozen municipalities, including Windsor, had voted to join the public hydro family. In 1917, Premier William Hearst ran another referendum and, again, another huge majority for public power. Hearst is another Premier who was so revered they named an entire block after him, and it's home today to the Ministry of Energy. How ironic is that?

To this day, Hydro One is still the only transmission network anywhere that was created by a direct vote of the people it was meant to serve. Sir Adam Beck, Hydro's first chairman: Among his last recorded words were, "I had hoped to live" long enough "to forge a band of iron around the Hydro to prevent its destruction by the politicians."

There are political consequences to selling public utilities: Cleveland, 1977, the mayor and seven councillors were defeated after they tried to sell the city's municipally owned utilities; Calgary, 2001, the mayoral candidate and, again, seven councillors were defeated when they ran on a campaign of selling Calgary Electric—at least they were up front about what they were going to do, unlike what has happened here in Ontario, Speaker.

Hydro One belongs to the people of Ontario. It doesn't belong to the Liberal Party. It's an asset to be treasured and not leveraged. It's an asset that returns close to \$800 million a year to the province, money that can be used for infrastructure as well as education, health care and the protection of the environment.

It's never too late to admit to a mistake; there's no shame in admitting to a mistake. Selling Hydro One is a major mistake. It's a short-term solution with long-term negative results to the taxpayers of Ontario. Premier, if you won't admit to making a colossal blunder, will you at least commit to holding a referendum to gauge public opinion and live by whatever voters decide?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate? Further debate? Further debate? I'll call the question if there's no further debate.

Mr. Arthur Potts: What a pleasure to speak to this bill today. This bill and this tactic characterizes what I've seen as a strategy of the third party in the course of this session of the Legislature. It's a strategy which I would describe as a petulant, political prank. If I could, I draw attention to the fact that your own policies have been rejected at the polls.

I want to be very clear. When I ran in Beaches–East York, the number one reason that the previous member said he did not support this budget was the “hidden” plan, as he called it, to sell the LCBO, Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation. He made that very clear. We had a public debate on that exact issue in the riding—on the Rogers debates, you can go there and see it. This was his number one concern.

This is our mandate. We ran on it, and guess what? After Ed Clark released his findings, the people of Ontario knew this was the direction. We had a by-election. We had a by-election once this was all even more publicly disclosed. Do you know how odd it is in a by-election, Mr. Speaker—do you know how rare it is—for a government to recover a seat from an opposition party in a by-election? Unprecedented. That is because the people of Ontario spoke.

I’m delighted that we have Councillor Davis in the House here today. Councillor Davis, welcome to Queen’s Park.

Councillor Davis has had an ongoing Twitter campaign against the Hydro One sale, and I appreciate it. I appreciate this wonderful ad that our friends at CUPE and OPSEU have put in there, because this ad has meant that finally some people are contacting my office about this issue. When I tell them the truth—that it won’t result in soaring privatized electricity rates—they support it. Thirty-five people have contacted me as a result of all the twittering and all the advertising.

It’s the right thing to do, and we’re moving forward to build Ontario up.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, Mr. Speaker, really, really—Earth calling Arthur Potts and the rest of the Liberal Party: You guys, in the last general election, by no means, way or shape, ever ran—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Beaches–East York. Refer to him by his riding name.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Earth calling the member from Beaches–East York.

Anyway, my point is that nobody—no Liberal—in the province of Ontario, in the last election, went to an all-candidates debate and said, “Vote for me, and I’m going to privatize hydro.” Do you know of any on this side of the House?

Interjections: No.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Do you know of any on that side of the House?

Interjections: No.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Absolutely not. I know Michael Prue, and there’s no way you said that. You’re just full of it.

Listen, when the government says in this House—

Interjections.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: That’s not unparliamentary. When the member—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Sit down. Yes, I would ask the member for Timmins–James Bay to rephrase that comment, because it could be taken as unparliamentary.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Full of hot air—how’s that?

So I say to the members across the way: There are none of you that ran on the privatization of Hydro One. If that had been the election issue, I can tell you that the result would have been awful different.

I’ll tell you what you did run on: You ran on Tim Hudak. That’s what you ran your last election on, and they’re the guys who tried to privatize it before you guys tried. So after all, you guys do not have a mandate to privatize Hydro One.

Our leader, Andrea Horwath, is putting forward this legislation. Why? Because the people of Ontario own Ontario Hydro, and the people of Ontario should be the ones who have a say when it comes to being able to sell it—yes or no.

I ask this question to the honourable members across the way: What are you afraid of? If you’re so sure about how this is a good idea, and how well it’s supported across the province of Ontario, then what are you afraid of? Then support the legislation, allow it to go to third reading, and let’s have a referendum, and if you’re right, you’ll be vindicated.

But I can tell you what they’re going to do. They’re going to vote against, because the Liberal Party knows (a) they never ran on this in the last election, (b) they never ran on it in the by-election in Sudbury, and (c) they know that if there was a referendum, they would lose it, because people are opposed to the privatization of hydro, pure and simple.

So I ask you again: Do the right thing. Vote for this bill, and allow the people of this province to have their say on the selling of Ontario hydro.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Hamilton Centre has two minutes to reply.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It’s very, very clear that the Liberal government does not have a mandate to sell off Hydro One. They put the enabling legislation to sell off Hydro One into a Harper-style omnibus budget bill that they rammed through the Legislature just yesterday. They allowed a couple of days of public hearings on this bill, here in Toronto. They didn’t talk to anybody around the province about their intention to sell off Hydro One, either during the election or during their budget bill process.

There is not a single Ontarian who went to the polls knowing that it was going to be the Liberal intention to sell off Hydro One. So this bill actually does what the government should have done. It does what the Liberals should have done. It attempts to give the people who own Hydro One a say in the sell-off of Hydro One.

I can tell you, Speaker, and my members can tell you as well, that we have been talking to Ontarians. We have been hearing what Ontarians have to say. They have been very clear: They do not want Hydro One sold off. They know it’s the wrong decision for Ontario.

Everyone else also understands that, Speaker. The Toronto Star says, "Privatizing the electricity grid was a bad idea when Mike Harris' Conservatives came up with it in 2001. It still is."

1530

The Globe and Mail writes that the sell-off has been "flawed from the outset" and is "more of a cash grab than a considered approach to maximizing value and making sound energy policy."

The Toronto Star again writes, "Rushing this risky deal into law is wrong. It needs a rethink before it's too late."

So Ontarians don't want it. All of the public opinion commentators are saying it's the wrong thing to do. Have some respect for the people of Ontario and put this wrong-headed decision to a referendum.

ELECTORAL REFORM

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I move that, in the opinion of this House, a select committee of the Legislative Assembly should be formed to investigate the electoral administrative process, voting procedures and complaints, make recommendations to amend the Elections Act to improve said processes, and, while conducting the review, the committee shall focus on specific issues of concern, including:

(1) the quality and integrity of the permanent electors list;

(2) the quality and integrity of voter identification documents and verification of Canadian citizenship and residency required;

(3) improving the roles and rights of candidates and/or their representatives in their ability to verify proper identification and citizenship requirements have been met for all voters;

(4) the establishment of a third-party review and complaints system to provide impartial investigation and resolution on conflicts that may arise as a result of irregularities identified by candidates, a candidate's representative, electors and individuals of the public, including issues identified with the operations by Elections Ontario; and

(5) Improving the record-keeping process for all challenged ballots/voters to facilitate a detailed complaint review process.

That the committee shall have the authority to conduct province-wide hearings and undertake research, and generally shall have such powers and duties as are required to investigate the issue.

That the committee shall present an interim report to the House no later than March 1, 2016, and a final report no later than June 2, 2016.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Mr. Balkissoon has moved private member's notice of motion number 54.

Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

I recognize the member from Scarborough–Rouge River.

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My motion is requesting that the Legislature establish a select committee to review our electoral system administrative process. I will speak to the five major issues stated in my motion.

In 2012, my private member's bill, Bill 106, Prevention of Electoral Fraud Act, 2012, died on the order paper. With another election in 2014, it is now crucial that the integrity of the whole voting process be examined thoroughly to protect the integrity of our democratic rights and citizenship requirements, the foundation of our voting system. Today I aim to bring to your attention weaknesses in our electoral processes that have allowed this important legal requirement to be secondary.

The quality and integrity of the permanent electors list: An accurate voters' list makes for a good election and a fair and even field for all candidates. Since the adoption of a permanent voters' list, we have experienced degradation in the integrity and accuracy of this list. I want to highlight some immediate concerns that were identified during the last two provincial elections as a result of the permanent electors list system.

Persons are added to the permanent voter list without valid proof of citizenship, which then becomes a permanent record. Mr. Speaker, I have those forms that Elections Ontario uses, and you will see that the forms do not require you to prove citizenship. I have copies. If other members have never seen these, I'll pass them around.

Once persons are added, they are assumed to be citizens in future elections and cannot be effectively challenged, investigated or audited because only acceptable ID is required to vote thereafter. Acceptable forms of ID are questionable because they do not provide proof of citizenship.

In many instances, the same individual appears twice on the voters' list with their first and last names reversed, causing two different voter cards to be issued and allowing for the possibility of two ballots being cast.

Mr. Jeya Kulasingham, a resident in my riding who is here in the east gallery, is a victim of receiving two cards with this problem. As an honest individual, he told me about it, expressing his concern with the system. The opportunity was there for him to vote twice—possibly once at the advance polls, and then again on election day—without any difficulty and using the very same ID because of the two separate entries on the voters' list.

People who are citizens who have been on the list previously for many, many elections were removed for some unknown reason and must be processed by a declaration, frustrating these voters, and in some cases they refuse to vote.

Many individuals who appear on the voters' list, when canvassed, would question how their name got on the valid voters' list when they are not citizens and have never voted in the past. Many names on the list don't live or exist at the particular address. Speaker, this is a significant problem.

The quality and integrity of voter identification documents and verification of Canadian citizenship and residency required: two known processes for adding a voter to the permanent list by Elections Ontario. One is that before election day you can fill out a form and you mail it in with a copy of your identification that they keep on file and you're added to the list. I can show you this form. It does not require you to prove you're a citizen.

On election day: A 2011 copy of the identification provided is not kept and it is not even recorded properly on the statutory declaration form for future review or even available for investigation. Elections Ontario did make a change. In 2014, they allowed a check box to say "Identification provided," but no proof, no copies, no verification later on.

On election day, a person may vouch for someone's identity with no valid verification of citizenship, valid address or other details.

Speaker, this is a major issue today, this one that's coming up: Many household bills are accepted as proof of address. In today's technological environment, it is very easy for a voter to download an electronic bill and make changes to suit their needs to provide acceptable proof of address. We have that happening significantly, and our elections officials are denying it. In many instances, false tenancy leases have been provided as acceptable proof of address.

Improving the roles and rights of candidates or their representatives in their ability to verify proper identification and citizenship requirements have been met for all voters, including those being added to the list: On advance polling and election day, scrutineers are not allowed to oversee the process at the revision table where a person takes an oath to get added to the permanent list and is provided an opportunity to receive a ballot and vote. This process must change to allow candidates full access to possibly challenge equitably all persons receiving a ballot.

The establishment of a third-party review and complaints system to provide impartial investigation and resolution on conflicts that may arise as a result of irregularities identified by candidates, a candidate's representative, electors, and individuals of the public, including issues identified by the operations of Elections Ontario: In 2011, my campaign identified a person who voted twice and 15 other administrative complaints to Elections Ontario. After two and a half years and another election in between, we were advised there was insufficient data to reach a conclusion and no evidence to take proper action against this person. Elections Ontario has advised that the matter is closed.

1540

Elections Ontario is currently allowed to conduct its own investigations of its own processes. That is, they are judge and jury of all complaints. A very expensive court process is the only avenue available to a candidate with a complaint for a fair and unbiased investigation or review. Speaker, that's not acceptable.

"(5) Improving the record keeping process for all challenged ballots/voters to facilitate a detailed complaint

review process" and/or independent audit: I requested and paid a very large fee for the election day statutory declaration forms in part of my riding from the 2011 election, to review the process and to verify completeness and accuracy. Upon review, in many cases the forms were incomplete, where the type of identification provided was not recorded on the form, or non-existent street addresses in my riding were given as the voter's live-in residence address. Along with paying for these forms, we were served with a legal warning by Elections Ontario that should I use the information on these forms to validate the person's residency in my riding by making a visit or contacting this person in any way, shape or form, I could not do it. I don't understand why Elections Ontario would send me this legal letter. Maybe Elections Ontario is ashamed of their process, or maybe they have a lot to hide.

As you can see, there are many weaknesses in the process. One may feel that one or two votes don't really make a difference. I tell you that one or two votes can make a difference in the world. You may not be able to assess the severity of these problems without having experienced them and may believe that these are minor in nature and easily corrected without considering the consequences.

Mr. Speaker, a real experience: In 1988, my colleague across the way, MPP Lorenzo Berardinetti, won his municipal election by one vote. So you can see that every vote counts. We need to ensure that every ballot cast is a valid, eligible voter.

My motion, if passed, would see the formation of a select committee that would "investigate the electoral administrative process, voting procedures and complaints, [and] make recommendations to amend the Elections Act to improve said processes." While conducting the review, the committee would engage all sectors involved in the electoral process to hear their concerns and make recommendations for improvements for a fair, transparent and accountable system that could withstand the test of an investigation or audit of the process, with the records that can facilitate these activities.

Currently, Elections Ontario's mindset is to increase the number of voters, with a lesser value on integrity and quality; their processes reflect this mindset. But in doing so, they have allowed weaknesses in the processes to dilute the integrity of our election process.

I ask everyone in this House to support my motion, to defend and restore the very foundation of our democracy which we so cherish here in Canada and in Ontario. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, but in closing, I say to many of you, I'm a winner and I'm identifying a problem. If I was a loser, the general world would have called me a sore loser. I take this matter very seriously.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mrs. Gila Martow: I kind of get chills hearing this topic because I think many of you know that I had a very close race in the general election in June. It's certainly true that every vote counts.

I remember my first campaign meeting, the first time I worked on a campaign, for Peter Kent, who is the MP in my riding, and Tony Clement. We had sort of a conference call with Tony Clement in the campaign office. Basically, that's all Tony Clement spoke about: that every single vote counts. He only won by 40 votes, I believe he said, in his first time running. When you're dealing with thousands of votes—I think in June it was a total of 51,000-plus votes in Thornhill. The unofficial number was 86 for my opponent. Then it was flipped: 86 in my favour. Then, after the recount, it went up to 106 in my favour. All of those numbers—whether it's 86 or 106, it works out to basically a statistical tie.

In terms of Elections Ontario, I can't speak on whether or not people were voting who shouldn't have voted, but that's always a concern. It certainly is a concern when people call and they say, "I saw my neighbour voting, and I know they're not a Canadian citizen. They're a US citizen," or, "They've emigrated from another country." They were told by whatever campaign they were supporting, "Go ahead. Nobody asks. You can vote." People ask me, "What should I do? Should I call the police?" While I have never recommended that anybody contact the police on their neighbour, I'm often left wondering: What is the correct protocol? What would Elections Ontario want people to do? All I have done is direct people to Elections Ontario and hope that these concerns are taken seriously.

I am very concerned not just about who is voting, but also who is working at elections, even though Elections Ontario did do their job. They audited the day after election day, and they found mistakes—several mistakes, in fact—where the numbers on the ballot envelopes were reversed so that my higher number was given to my opponent, and her lower number was given to me. It happened several times, always in my opponent's favour, that the numbers were reversed on the tally sheets. Elections Ontario did their job because they did five audits, and each time they caught every single one of those mistakes and reversed it. So I cannot criticize Elections Ontario for the audit.

I can question who's working at those desks. Are they keeping track of where those mistakes were? Either the people working at those desks or those stations were committing some kind of fraud, in which case they shouldn't be rehired next election; or they were making mistakes, in which case they shouldn't be rehired the next election. Even if the other people at that station weren't involved in any of these "mistakes," they were supposed to be supervising each other, to the best of my knowledge, so maybe they dropped the ball in terms of supervising.

I would ask Elections Ontario to focus on ensuring that the people working at elections are up to the calibre that we need, and also to look at the concerns brought forward by this motion to ensure that the people who are voting in our elections and are registered to vote are the ones who should indeed be voting.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I rise today to speak to the motion put forward by the member from Scarborough—Rouge River on the establishment of a select committee of the Legislative Assembly with an eye to investigating the electoral process, voting procedures and complaints.

The member also asked the select committee to focus their research and investigation on the quality of the permanent electors list. I applaud any efforts to increase our democratic right to vote and to ensure the integrity of our elections.

The behaviour of our federal counterparts necessitates that we take action to restore the public's faith in our electoral system. For those of us who have stood for a few elections, I think we can all agree that the permanent electors list is rife with duplicates, deceased persons not removed and many other errors. In that way, I am eager to support this motion.

The member further asks the committee to investigate the quality and integrity of voter identification documents and verification of citizenship and residency. I would absolutely like to see changes to the current voting identification requirements and their enforcement.

There are two key voter groups that I want to see included in the work of the committee: seniors and immigrants. Anecdotal evidence obtained by Elections Canada suggests that ID requirements may present significant barriers to seniors. In particular, those residing in long-term-care facilities may not hold original copies of their identification, or addresses on the documents may be inconsistent.

1550

In the case of immigrants, there are hundreds of thousands of Ontario residents who pay taxes and use services but have no say in who represents them because they are permanent residents and not Canadian citizens. Permanent residents must live in Canada for a minimum of three years before they can apply to become a Canadian citizen. While this may not sound like a long time, recent reports have indicated that the processing time for citizenship applications is growing, so it is taking years longer for immigrants to become citizens and therefore exercise their democratic right to vote. In addition, because elections only take place every few years, someone might have the opportunity to vote only after they have lived in Canada for eight or nine years.

Most importantly, I want a commitment from this government that the committee will conduct open and accessible meetings while pursuing their work. An open and transparent process is the only way to put forward true democratic reform. The last time this government made changes, they did so exclusively, by invitation only. That is not the way I would hope this committee operates. My party understands the keen link between voting and the health of the democratic process, and I hope for that to be shown throughout the work of the committee.

We also have concerns about the appointment of a new third-party review system. This task currently falls to the Chief Electoral Officer, and I am wondering why

the government feels that the CEO is unable to carry out that portion of his job. While it certainly took him some time to respond to the allegations of bribery in the Sudbury by-election, he did return a verdict that stated that the actions of Gerry Lougheed Jr. and Patricia Sorbara constituted an apparent contravention of the Election Act.

This brings me to my final concern. I absolutely want to see electoral reform in Ontario, but I don't want the focus of that reform to be narrowed by a government that balks at the opportunity to listen to Ontarians, as they are doing with the wrong-headed plan of selling off Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Scarborough—Agincourt.

Ms. Soo Wong: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be sharing my time with the member for York South—Weston and the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Let me begin my remarks by thanking the member from Scarborough—Rouge River for bringing this motion forward to the House today. He has been very passionate about the issue of the integrity and the quality of the electoral process. He has been talking to all the members of the House for years about this issue. It's very important that we have a clean, transparent, but most importantly, integral process of election.

As a member of the Legislature elected for the first time in 2011, I can tell you about a number of concerns that I have raised about the whole election process. Just to give you an example, Mr. Speaker, last year in my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt, we had a provincial election and also a federal by-election. In the federal by-election, one polling station—I know because I was there—didn't open until 10:30, when every advertisement for the federal election said 8 o'clock. For over an hour, the residents, frail seniors, had been standing there with their identification. Nobody was present until I started tweeting and asking, "Who is the DRO? Who is the official responsible for this polling station?" Nobody showed up until almost 10:30, when the polling station opened at 8. That's a federal by-election; that could easily happen in Ontario.

In the last provincial election, I raised concerns about numerous developments across the city of Toronto, particularly in my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt. There's a huge development at Kennedy and the 401; there are four condominium towers as well as townhouses. They did not have a polling station, and when I filed a complaint, the response from the electoral office to my staff was that there weren't too many Canadians in this polling station. My God—four towers with over 20 floors and about 30 townhouses. It's very clear that not only did those residents not have a polling station at this new development, they had to travel to an elementary school to have 10 polling stations. If there were no voters out there, why would Elections Ontario put 10 polling stations in one little elementary school? Clearly, there must be voters out there. When I filed a complaint, there was no follow-up. So it's very clear that the motion put

forth by the member from Scarborough—Rouge River clearly asks us to establish some kind of review and deal with the complaints process and issues identified by members as well as by Joe Public.

The other piece—I know there has been ongoing concern in Scarborough—is the integrity of identification. Not only did the member speak about fraudulent identification cards; I know that people bring all kinds of identification cards that are not considered legitimate by Elections Ontario. It's very, very clear that we need a review, and the motion that the member has brought forward today is very timely.

Just today, both the Premier and the Attorney General are bringing in legislation about electoral reform in Ontario. I believe that the motion put forward today is very timely and very appropriate for us to consider. I would definitely encourage every member of the House to consider voting in support of the motion by the member from Scarborough—Rouge River.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Before I ask for further debate, I'm pleased to recognize a good friend, Norm Sterling, who served as the member for Carleton—Grenville in the 31st to 33rd Parliaments, the member for Carleton in the 34th to 36th Parliaments, the member for Lanark—Carleton in the 37th and 38th Parliaments and the member for Carleton—Mississippi Mills in the 39th Parliament. Welcome, Norm. It's great to have you here again.

Further debate?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm pleased to participate in this debate. I know this is an issue that the member from Scarborough—Rouge River feels strongly about and has some very personal examples that he believes we can study further in a select committee.

I have to say, as a member who has now served on two separate select committees—one with the member from Scarborough—Rouge River—that they have a lot of value, because we, as members, don't go in with the preconceived notion of knowing all the answers.

It's interesting to note that Norm Sterling is here today, because in 2009, there was actually a select committee on election financing and elections. Norm Sterling, Peter Kormos and Greg Sorbara all served on that select committee. I would suggest to you that those were pretty strong parliamentarians to look at an issue in a way that was about finding solutions. They didn't come with their partisan hats on. They came with, "This is what we are seeing out in our communities." Peter Kormos, of course, served primarily a smaller, less-urban riding; Greg Sorbara, very urban; and Norm, up in Ottawa, a little bit of both. That we had those three very experienced, very seasoned parliamentarians willing to serve on that select committee in 2009 speaks to the fact that we have an opportunity, when we have these select committees, to delve much deeper into issues.

The NDP member for London—Fanshawe who spoke—I'm sorry; she left the chamber—raised concerns about: Does this not actually impede or raise issues that we think the Chief Electoral Officer is not doing his job?

I would respectfully disagree. I think what this is about is that the CEO, the Chief Electoral Officer, must follow the rules as they are set out by us as legislators. If we can make those rules better, if we can clarify them, if we can, quite frankly, through the suggestion of a select committee, find out where the real problems exist, I'm all for it.

A very quick example: In the rural part of my riding of Dufferin—Caledon, Canada Post changed the postal codes a number of years ago. You'd think that would be fairly benign. Three years later, when you went into that lovely little website that said, "Enter your postal code, and we'll tell you what riding you live in and where you are to vote," they weren't even sending them to the wrong voting location; they were sending them to the wrong riding. In Dufferin—Caledon, it's not unusual that it takes a number of hours to go from one end of the riding to the other. When you're suggesting to someone that they are told to go to an entirely different riding, we are clearly doing something wrong. I'm happy to support the recommendation to form a select committee. I would lobby strongly to have some additions included in it.

1600

As we all know, Greg Essensa, as the current Chief Electoral Officer, does a report post every general election—and by-election, actually—and he has many, many recommendations. Some are touched on in the points raised by the member from Scarborough—Rouge River, but others I'd like to see included.

Let's look at some other jurisdictions that seem to be increasing their voter turnout, not seeing it shrink. Let's look at some other jurisdictions that seem to have gotten a handle on third-party advertising and the controls that they have been able to impose, so that outside influence is not unduly impacting the outcome of elections. I would love to have those types of things discussed and hopefully come up with some recommendations through the formation of a select committee.

We all have our own personal examples. I have now run as a candidate in three general elections, and I don't even want to tell you how many elections I participated in as a volunteer. We need a better process. We need a process that absolutely ensures that everyone who wants to vote has the right and ability to vote, but we also need to ensure the integrity of the process.

It is very special and something that we should hold very dear that we have the ability here in Ontario and in Canada to participate in democratic processes like elections. But the converse is that we don't give it to everybody. You have to earn it. You have to earn it through your Canadian citizenship, and if we have those parameters in place, then quite frankly we also need a process in place to ensure that only the individuals who have the right to vote in a particular riding are given that vote. It shouldn't be taken lightly. I think that we can do a better job, and I think that a select committee would be a very good place to start to ensure that we cover off some of these.

I'm happy to support this resolution, and I hope that we can get past the small concerns that you may have about treading on the Chief Electoral Officer's mandate. Quite frankly, while I've not spoken to him directly on this resolution, I know that he is looking for action on some of these problems, and he would like to see improvements. So let's just get 'er done.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: It is a great pleasure for me to rise as MPP for London West to speak to this motion from the member for Scarborough—Rouge River. I'd like to congratulate him on this motion. Certainly I think we all agree and we all recognize that a healthy democracy depends absolutely on having a fair and impartial and transparent electoral process, with safeguards in place to make sure that the integrity of the ballot box is protected.

As my colleague the member for London—Fanshawe said, New Democrats certainly support the intent of this motion. But at the same time, we are concerned about the fact that whenever the spectre of voter fraud is raised, it can be used—and has been used in a number of US states and also at the federal level—to really introduce new restrictive measures that can lead to voter suppression. So we raise that caution as we look at this motion.

The other requirement of a healthy democracy is that we do everything possible, everything we can, to remove barriers to participation, to make sure that everyone in this province who is eligible to cast a ballot is able to do so. When we look at voting turnout in both provincial and federal elections, we see that we're at about 60%, so we have a long way to go to make sure that everyone is able to get out to vote.

Within that 60%, there are certain groups who are less likely to vote. Voter turnout is much lower among 18-to-24-year-olds. It's much lower among single parents who have young children, who, as we know, are overwhelmingly women. It's much lower among renters compared to homeowners; renters tend to be low-income. It's much lower among those who are unemployed or not in the labour force. In addition to ensuring the integrity of the electoral process, we also need to take action to reduce the barriers that these groups face when they go to cast their ballot.

When we look at voter ID requirements in particular, we know that they can present some significant barriers to voting participation. As the member for London—Fanshawe said, this is particularly the case for seniors and immigrants. It's also the case for students. Students often have difficulty obtaining the necessary documentation to establish their eligibility to vote, and we would definitely want to ensure, when this committee is proposing changes to voter ID requirements, that there is no disenfranchisement of people who are actually eligible to vote.

One of the recommendations that I would bring forward is that this select committee look at ensuring the right to vote for all eligible voters. The research that is referenced in this motion could look at some of the

strategies that have been used in other jurisdictions to increase voter turnout to make it easier for people to participate in the electoral process. We know some jurisdictions have looked at electronic voting machines, photograph ballots and some other modifications to polling places, in addition to increased accessibility and transportation to polling places. These are all strategies that I would encourage the select committee to look at.

In closing, I want to say that we support the motion and look forward to participating in this select committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mrs. Laura Albanese: It is a pleasure to stand here in support of this motion that has been brought forward by my colleague from Scarborough–Rouge River. As has been mentioned, he’s very passionate about this issue, but I think it is obviously an issue that we’re all passionate about. We in this chamber have all gone through elections and therefore go through the electoral process, and we have our own comments.

He is bringing forward five key points to be examined by the select committee. One of the points that he is bringing forward is the quality and integrity of the permanent voters’ list. That’s the first thing I would like to talk about, because I think that identification documents and verification of Canadian citizenship and residency are very important. In Canada, in Ontario, you have to be a Canadian citizen to be able to vote.

However, that’s not always required. I want to share one example that personally involved me in one of my elections. During a campaign, I knocked at a door and the constituent showed me a voter’s card. He was very honest with me. He said, “I’m not a citizen, but I received a card. Can I vote?” I said, “Well, if you’re not a citizen, you can’t.”

A few days later, I ran into the same constituent, and he was quite upset. He said, “Another candidate came to my door and told me that if I have a card, I can vote. Did you think I wasn’t going to vote for you, and that’s why you said that I shouldn’t go and vote?” That obviously wasn’t the case, but now I had lost his confidence because I had given him not a positive answer. In any case, I think we need to strengthen the process.

To what the members from London–Fanshawe and London West were saying: Yes, it is difficult for immigrants to get Canadian citizenship, but we have to encourage that, because if more people have citizenship, they will teach their kids. They see their parents going to vote, they see their grandparents going to vote and that will encourage even young voters to vote at election time. I think that’s very important.

1610

Another point that I wanted to make is that Elections Ontario—and I do have the report here, the Elections Ontario 2013–14 annual report: Ready Now, Ready Next. On page 5, for example, it says, “Ensuring the highest possible degree of accuracy with PREO”—the permanent

register of electors for Ontario—“is key to meeting our legislated obligations”—“our legislated obligations.”

So we can help—through better legislation—Elections Ontario do a better job. That is our duty here in the chamber. So if we improve the electoral process through legislation, we can also assist the Chief Electoral Officer to do his job and Elections Ontario to do their job.

I want to end by commending my colleague from Scarborough–Rouge River for putting forward this motion. As he had mentioned, if he was a candidate who had lost, everyone would have thought that these were just sour grapes, but he has consistently won his elections. He’s really passionate about this. We can all make a difference. I think a select committee is a great way to bring good ideas from all sides of this House forward.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Hon. Helena Jaczek: It’s a pleasure to rise in support of motion number 54, brought in by our colleague the member for Scarborough–Rouge River, one of my 10 neighbours.

As we’ve heard, he’s certainly been talking about this issue for a number of years and has some extremely valid concerns. The concept of striking a select committee is one that I’m very much in favour of. There are many individuals here in the House who have served on select committees, and I think we have all found them a great opportunity to put any partisan ideas aside and come together to solve a problem.

And this is a problem for all of us. We all know that, essentially, the legitimacy of our electoral process is the bedrock of our democratic system. So many new Canadians do come to Canada and Ontario as a refuge, in many cases, from oppressive regimes. Some of those claim to be democracies, but they’re democracies in name only. Many of my constituents tell me that they view Canada as a place that has fair rules that apply to everyone, and when they discover—and we’ve heard many examples today—about individuals receiving two cards and so on, they’re really very, very shocked that this could happen. There are too many loopholes.

I’m going to focus a little bit on the case of individuals being added to the list of eligible voters on election day. The type of statutory declaration at the poll without any appropriate verification is completely insufficient. Many members will remember the case of the federal member of Parliament for Etobicoke Centre who, a few years ago, lost his seat by some 26 votes. One of the many pieces of evidence that was presented to demonstrate the procedural errors on election day was that two individuals had listed their address as 20 Blue Jays Way, and they were allowed to vote in the riding of Etobicoke Centre. You would have thought that any one of the polling clerks would have picked this up immediately as clearly being an error.

I had a recent example of people claiming to live in my riding who clearly don’t. We all know there’s been considerable controversy over the health and physical

education curriculum. My office in my great riding of Oak Ridges–Markham, with the highest number of people in it—some 250,000—has been inundated with concerns over that curriculum. My staff follows up on emails asking for addresses to ensure they are my constituents. We've had the astonishing finding of, apparently, more than 20 people are living in the same household, and even in my very populous riding, this is not actually happening.

So we know that these sorts of loopholes do exist. They need to be removed. We need the select committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I'm pleased to join in the debate. I think it's an important issue to address. We need to look at electoral reform, so I applaud the member for bringing forward the issue, but I think we need to focus on what the major concern is when we look at electoral reform.

What we've seen in Ontario in particular over the past 24 years, more than two decades, has been a decline in voter turnout year after year. Only this past election did we see an increase which bucked the trend of more than two decades. We actually saw a bit of an increase, which was a positive sign, but to put that into numbers: In 1990, we saw 64.4% voter turnout. Contrast that with 2011, which was the lowest in the history of Ontario: We saw that a dismal less than half of the people who were eligible to vote voted—48.2% of people voted in Ontario.

This is a serious problem. It's a serious erosion of our democracy. When people don't vote in a democracy, it raises some serious concerns. So some of the things that I submit we should be doing in the select committee is looking at ways to encourage people to vote, to make it easier to vote, to make it more accessible to vote, and looking at strategies—like the member from London West mentioned, looking at other jurisdictions for best practices. Where are jurisdictions that people vote more often, and how are they able to encourage them to vote? What are the strategies? And to look at those and see if we can implement some of those strategies here in Ontario.

It's truly troubling. If we look at it and just think for a moment that the people who are making the decisions in this province—whether it's municipally, whether it's federally, if we look at the voter turnout, we are only representing a small number of people who actually care enough or who are actually able to have their voices heard. It's incumbent on us as legislators to reverse this trend.

We look at some of the problems people face. Some of the issues have been raised. One of the issues is the system of voting that requires people to go to polling stations. One of the members mentioned that a polling station wasn't even open. That is an extreme travesty, that such an important thing like voting would be impeded because a polling station wasn't open on time, at the right time.

Other issues we see far too often: Polling stations are not accessible. They're located in areas of our com-

munity that are hard to get to and it's not convenient for people to go out and vote. We need to make sure it's convenient. We need to make sure it's accessible.

The other area that we've seen serious concerns with is the timing of voting. The majority of folks who go to work aren't able to vote until after the working day, which, for a lot of folks, is after 5 o'clock. We see a rush at 5 p.m. or 6 p.m. to closing time, which is at 9. It's really that three-hour window that's the most popular time to vote. We need to make sure we do more to make sure that at that time period there aren't lineups and it isn't difficult. If people walk up to a voting station or a polling station and see that there's a huge lineup and it will take hours to vote, and that discourages them from voting, we've done a disservice.

I think our focus with this select committee needs to be on how to encourage voting, how to encourage democracy. It should be a key issue in the minds of any legislator. We're here because we represent the voices of the people in our ridings, and if we are not encouraging those people to actually have their voices heard on voting day, if we're not encouraging them to come out and actually exercise their right, then we've done a disservice.

With respect to the issue of voter fraud or the idea that there might be people who have received two voter cards—and I applaud the member for bringing an example here today, to bring a face to that issue. Certainly we need to make sure that the voting system has integrity, that the election process has integrity and that there are legitimate people who are voting. That's, of course, an important issue, so we support that as well.

Really, the focus needs to be on how we can encourage more people to vote and exercise that right.

1620

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate.

I recognize the member for Scarborough–Rouge River, who has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I just want to thank my colleagues on all sides of this Legislature who spoke on my motion, and those who were listening very carefully.

Candidates have a vested investment—and I say "investment" because it's monetary—in ensuring a fair, transparent, accurate system with a high degree of integrity. That is the responsibility for us as lawmakers, who must protect our election process to ensure our citizens' right to elect their representatives and the future of our province's democratic foundation.

We can no longer plead ignorance of this issue and plant our heads in the sand. The degradation of our voting processes and the accuracy of the permanent list of electors is a major problem that will ultimately impact all of us in time and presents an immediate and growing threat to the integrity of the democracy we have spent our careers serving, defending and building up for the next generation.

I say to all of you: Look around the world and learn about electoral corruption and fraud. We don't need that

blight to take control of our system. Canada proudly oversees other democracies' election processes because we are proud of our past accomplishments as a democracy. We must not let our pride prevent us from being alert to a degradation in our process and the long-standing principles and values that may not withstand the test of the current environment.

The findings of the very expensive—in the hundreds of thousands of dollars—court challenge regarding a 2011 federal election outcome in Etobicoke Centre should serve as a wake-up call to all of us to review the integrity of our provincial lists and ensure that we're delivering uniform and equitable participatory channels for citizens to cast their ballots and duly elect representatives who reflect the votes of those qualified citizens with accuracy and consistency.

Mr. Speaker, I also bring to our attention the most recent Canadian election process review, conducted by Harry Neufeld.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

ENDING PREDATORY ELECTRICITY RETAILING ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR L'ÉLIMINATION DES PRIX ABUSIFS DANS LA VENTE AU DÉTAIL D'ÉLECTRICITÉ

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): We will deal with the first ballot item, number 58, standing in the name of Ms. Campbell.

Ms. Campbell has moved second reading of Bill 111, An Act to amend the Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010 to eliminate fixed rate electricity contracts between retailers and consumers. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We will deal with this vote after we have finished the other business.

LISTENING TO ONTARIANS ACT (HYDRO ONE AND OTHER ELECTRICITY ASSETS), 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA NÉCESSITÉ D'ÊTRE À L'ÉCOUTE DES ONTARIENS (HYDRO ONE ET AUTRES ÉLÉMENTS D'ACTIF LIÉS À L'ÉLECTRICITÉ)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Ms. Horwath has moved second reading of Bill 107, An Act to require a referendum before the disposition of the Crown's electricity assets. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will deal with this vote after we have finished the other business.

ELECTORAL REFORM

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Mr. Balkissoon has moved private member's notice of motion number 54. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

ENDING PREDATORY ELECTRICITY RETAILING ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR L'ÉLIMINATION DES PRIX ABUSIFS DANS LA VENTE AU DÉTAIL D'ÉLECTRICITÉ

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1625 to 1630.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I would ask that the members please take their seats.

Ms. Campbell has moved second reading of Bill 111, An Act to amend the Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010 to eliminate fixed rate electricity contracts between retailers and consumers.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing while they are counted by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Gates, Wayne	McNaughton, Monte
Anderson, Granville	Gélinas, France	Meilleur, Madeleine
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gravelle, Michael	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Bailey, Robert	Gretzky, Lisa	Miller, Paul
Baker, Yvan	Hardeman, Ernie	Munro, Julia
Balkissoon, Bas	Harris, Michael	Murray, Glen R.
Ballard, Chris	Hatfield, Percy	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Barrett, Toby	Hoggarth, Ann	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Horwath, Andrea	Oraziotti, David
Bisson, Gilles	Hoskins, Eric	Potts, Arthur
Bradley, James J.	Hunter, Mitzie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Campbell, Sarah	Jaczek, Helena	Rinaldi, Lou
Chan, Michael	Jones, Sylvia	Sandals, Liz
Chiarelli, Bob	Kiwal, Sophie	Sattler, Peggy
Collie, Mike	Kwinter, Monte	Sergio, Mario
Coteau, Michael	Lalonde, Marie-France	Singh, Jagmeet
Crack, Grant	MacLaren, Jack	Sousa, Charles
Damerla, Dipika	Malhi, Harinder	Tabuns, Peter
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Taylor, Monique
Dhillon, Vic	Mantha, Michael	Thibeault, Glenn
Dickson, Joe	Martins, Cristina	Vanhof, John
DiNovo, Cheri	Martow, Gila	Vernile, Daiene
Dong, Han	Matthews, Deborah	Wong, Soo
Duguid, Brad	Mauro, Bill	Yakabuski, John
Fife, Catherine	McGarry, Kathryn	Zimmer, David
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMahon, Eleanor	
Forster, Cindy	McMeekin, Ted	

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): All those opposed to the motion will please rise and remain standing while they are counted by the Clerk.

Nays

Mordir, Reza

Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe
Dong, Han

Mauro, Bill
McGarry, Kathryn
McMahon, Eleanor
McMeekin, Ted

Vernile, Daiene
Wong, Soo
Zimmer, David

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 79; the nays are 1.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to standing order 98(j), the bill is referred to the Committee of the Whole House unless the member specifies otherwise.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: General Government, please.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is the majority in favour of this bill being referred to the Standing Committee on General Government. Agreed? Agreed.

The doors will now be opened for 30 seconds.

LISTENING TO ONTARIANS ACT (HYDRO ONE AND OTHER ELECTRICITY ASSETS), 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA NÉCESSITÉ D'ÊTRE À L'ÉCOUTE DES ONTARIENS (HYDRO ONE ET AUTRES ÉLÉMENTS D'ACTIF LIÉS À L'ÉLECTRICITÉ)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Ms. Horwath has moved second reading of Bill 107, An Act to require a referendum before the disposition of the Crown's electricity assets.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Armstrong, Teresa J.
Bailey, Robert
Barrett, Toby
Bisson, Gilles
Campbell, Sarah
DiNovo, Cheri
Fife, Catherine
Forster, Cindy
Gates, Wayne
Gélinas, France

Gretzky, Lisa
Hardeman, Ernie
Harris, Michael
Hatfield, Percy
Horwath, Andrea
Jones, Sylvia
MacLaren, Jack
Mantha, Michael
Martow, Gila
McNaughton, Monte

Miller, Paul
Munro, Julia
Sattler, Peggy
Singh, Jagmeet
Tabuns, Peter
Taylor, Monique
Vanthof, John
Yakabuski, John

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): All those opposed to the motion will please rise and remain standing until they are recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Albanese, Laura
Anderson, Granville
Baker, Yvan
Balkissoon, Bas
Baillard, Chris
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Bradley, James J.
Chan, Michael
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike
Coteau, Michael
Crack, Grant
Damerla, Dipika
Dei Duca, Steven

Duguid, Brad
Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Gravelle, Michael
Hoggarth, Ann
Hoskins, Eric
Hunter, Mitzie
Jaczek, Helena
Kiwala, Sophie
Kwinter, Monte
Lalonde, Marie-France
Malhi, Harinder
Mangat, Amrit
Martins, Cristina
Matthews, Deborah

Meilleur, Madeleine
Milczyn, Peter Z.
Mordir, Reza
Murray, Glen R.
Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Naqvi, Yasir
Oraziotti, David
Potts, Arthur
Qaadri, Shafiq
Rinaldi, Lou
Sandals, Liz
Sergio, Mario
Sousa, Charles
Thibeault, Glenn

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 28; the nays are 53.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I declare the motion lost.

Second reading negated.

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 81

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe we have—

Interjections.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Ted Arnott): I would ask the House to come to order. I need to hear the government House leader. We have other business.

Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Thank you, Speaker. I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding Bill 81, An Act to proclaim Intergenerational Day Canada.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Ted Arnott): Do we have consent to put forward with a motion without notice regarding An Act to proclaim Intergenerational Day Canada? Agreed? Agreed.

I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I move that the orders for second and third reading of Bill 81 be immediately called and the question put on the motions for second and third reading without debate or amendment.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Ted Arnott): I'm pleased to recognize the member for Toronto—Danforth.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 81, An Act to proclaim Intergenerational Day Canada—

The Acting Chair (Mr. Ted Arnott): My mistake.

Mr. Naqvi moved that the orders for second and third reading of Bill 81 be immediately called and the question put on the motions for second and third reading without debate or amendment. Agreed? Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

1640

INTERGENERATIONAL DAY CANADA ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA JOURNÉE INTERGÉNÉRATIONNELLE AU CANADA

Mr. Tabuns moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 81, An Act to proclaim Intergenerational Day Canada / Projet de loi 81, Loi proclamant la Journée intergénérationnelle au Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

INTERGENERATIONAL DAY
CANADA ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA JOURNÉE
INTERGÉNÉRATIONNELLE AU CANADA

Mr. Tabuns moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 81, An Act to proclaim Intergenerational Day Canada / Projet de loi 81, Loi proclamant la Journée intergénérationnelle au Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Orders of the day? Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Mr. Speaker, Her Honour awaits.

Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario entered the chamber of the Legislative Assembly and took her seat upon the throne.

ROYAL ASSENT
SANCTION ROYALE

Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell (Lieutenant Governor): Pray be seated.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): May it please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly of the province has, at its present meetings thereof, passed certain bills to which, in the name of and on behalf of the said Legislative Assembly, I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker): The following are the titles of the bills to which Your Honour's assent is prayed:

An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015 / Loi édictant la Loi de 2015 sur l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la prospérité.

An Act to proclaim the month of June as Ontario Bike Month / Loi proclamant le mois de juin Mois de la bicyclette en Ontario.

An Act to proclaim Terry Fox Day / Loi proclamant le Jour de Terry Fox.

An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regarding efforts to change sexual orientation or gender identity / Loi

modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-santé et la Loi de 1991 sur les professions de la santé réglementées à l'égard des interventions visant à changer l'orientation sexuelle ou l'identité sexuelle.

An Act to proclaim Intergenerational Day Canada / Loi proclamant la Journée intergénérationnelle au Canada.

An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts / Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

An Act to proclaim Ontario Flag Day / Loi proclamant le Jour du drapeau de l'Ontario.

An Act to revive Ottawa School Day Nursery Inc.

An Act to revive DSPT International (Canada) Inc.

An Act to revive 990046 Ontario Inc.

An Act to revive 731149 Ontario Limited.

An Act respecting The Centre for International Governance Innovation.

An Act respecting the Supply Chain Management Association Ontario.

An Act to amend The Welland-Port Colborne Airport Act, 1976.

An Act to revive Weiche Estates Inc.

An Act to revive 1476263 Ontario Inc.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): In Her Majesty's name, Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor doth assent to these bills.

Au nom de Sa Majesté, Son Honneur la lieutenant-gouverneure sanctionne ces projets de loi.

Her Honour was then pleased to retire.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Orders of the day? The government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I guess I'm mindful of the time; thus, I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The government House leader has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. The motion is carried.

This House stands adjourned until September 14. Have a good summer.

The House adjourned at 1648.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Haltoun Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Samia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiles, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brook	
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Vacant
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo
Han Dong, Michael Harris
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala
Monique Taylor
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs / Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Président: Grant Crack
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson
Mike Colle, Grant Crack
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Président: John Fraser
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins
Jim McDonnell, Randy Pettapiece
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadri
Todd Smith
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Han Dong, John Fraser
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile
Bill Walker
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de la politique sociale

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment / Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère sexuel

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott
Han Dong, Sylvia Jones
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

Continued from back cover

Ontario Energy Board

Mr. Peter Tabuns	4935
Hon. Bob Chiarelli	4935

Agri-food industry

Ms. Daiene Vernile	4936
Hon. Jeff Leal	4936

Health care funding

Mr. Jack MacLaren	4936
Hon. Eric Hoskins	4936

Class size

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky	4937
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4937
Hon. Liz Sandals	4937

Post-secondary education

Mr. Chris Ballard	4938
Hon. Reza Moridi	4938

Aboriginal land dispute

Mr. Toby Barrett	4938
Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4938

Pan Am Games

Mr. Paul Miller	4939
Hon. Steven Del Duca	4939

Senior citizens

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry	4940
Hon. Mario Sergio	4940

Heritage conservation

Mr. Tim Hudak	4940
Hon. Michael Coteau	4940

Waste disposal

Mr. Peter Tabuns	4941
Hon. Glen R. Murray	4941

Anne Stokes

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac)	4941
-------------------------------------	------

Legislative pages

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac)	4941
-------------------------------------	------

Visitors

Hon. Michael Coteau	4942
---------------------------	------

DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFFÉRÉS

Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015, Bill 6, Mr. Duguid / Loi de 2015 sur l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la prospérité, projet de loi 6, M. Duguid

Third reading agreed to	4942
-------------------------------	------

Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015, Bill 66, Mr. Murray / Loi de 2015 sur la protection des Grands Lacs, projet de loi 66, M. Murray

Second reading agreed to	4943
--------------------------------	------

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Jack MacLaren	4943
Ms. Cheri DiNovo	4943
Ms. Sylvia Jones	4943
Ms. Daiene Vernile	4943

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

Crimean Tatars

Mr. Jack MacLaren	4943
-------------------------	------

Pan Am Games

Mr. Paul Miller	4944
-----------------------	------

Cambridge Sports Hall of Fame

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry	4944
----------------------------	------

Member for Oxford

Ms. Sylvia Jones	4944
------------------------	------

Horse racing industry

Mme France Gélinas	4944
--------------------------	------

Italian Heritage Month

Ms. Daiene Vernile	4945
--------------------------	------

Dorothy Rungeling

Mr. Tim Hudak	4945
---------------------	------

Portugal Day

Mr. Han Dong	4945
--------------------	------

Seniors' Month

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris	4946
--------------------------------	------

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES / RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS

Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

M. Shafiq Qaadri	4946
Report adopted	4946

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

Electoral Boundaries Act, 2015, Bill 115,

**Mme Meilleur / Loi de 2015 sur les limites des
circonscriptions électorales, projet de loi 115,
Mme Meilleur**

First reading agreed to	4946
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur	4946

Correctional Services Staff Recognition Week Act, 2015, Bill 116, Ms. Naidoo-Harris / Loi de 2015 sur la Semaine de la reconnaissance du personnel des services correctionnels, projet de loi 116,

Mme Naidoo-Harris

First reading agreed to	4947
Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris	4947

MOTIONS

Consideration of Bill 77

Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4947
Motion agreed to	4947

Affirming Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Act, 2015, Bill 77, Ms. DiNovo / Loi de 2015 sur l'affirmation de l'orientation sexuelle et de l'identité sexuelle, projet de loi 77, Mme DiNovo	
Third reading agreed to	4947

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Renewable energy

Mr. Jack MacLaren	4947
-------------------------	------

Mining industry

Ms. Sarah Campbell	4948
--------------------------	------

Credit unions

Mrs. Cristina Martins	4948
-----------------------------	------

Health care

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson	4948
----------------------------	------

Way-finding signs

Mr. Michael Mantha	4948
--------------------------	------

Water fluoridation

Mr. Bob Delaney	4949
-----------------------	------

Alzheimer's disease

Mr. Bill Walker	4949
-----------------------	------

Hospital funding

Ms. Cindy Forster	4949
-------------------------	------

French-language education

Ms. Sophie Kiwala	4950
-------------------------	------

Off-road vehicles

Mr. Bill Walker	4950
-----------------------	------

Privatization of public assets

Mme France Gélinas	4950
--------------------------	------

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS / AFFAIRES D'INTÉRÊT PUBLIC ÉMANANT DES DÉPUTÉS

Ending Predatory Electricity Retailing Act, 2015,

Bill 111, Ms. Campbell / Loi de 2015 sur l'élimination des prix abusifs dans la vente au détail d'électricité, projet de loi 111,

Mme Campbell

Ms. Sarah Campbell	4951
Mr. Bob Delaney	4952
Mr. John Yakabuski	4953
Mr. Gilles Bisson	4955
Ms. Eleanor McMahon	4956
Ms. Cindy Forster	4957
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry	4957
Ms. Sarah Campbell	4958

Listening to Ontarians Act (Hydro One and Other Electricity Assets), 2015, Bill 107, Ms. Horwath / Loi de 2015 sur la nécessité d'être à l'écoute des Ontariens (Hydro One et autres éléments d'actif liés à l'électricité), projet de loi 107, Mme Horwath

Ms. Andrea Horwath	4959
Hon. Charles Sousa	4960
Mr. John Yakabuski	4962
Mr. Peter Tabuns	4964
Mr. Bob Delaney	4964
Mr. Percy Hatfield	4965
Mr. Arthur Potts	4965
Mr. Gilles Bisson	4966
Ms. Andrea Horwath	4966

Electoral reform

Mr. Bas Balkissoon	4967
Mrs. Gila Martow	4968
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong	4969
Ms. Soo Wong	4970
Ms. Sylvia Jones	4970
Ms. Peggy Sattler	4971
Mrs. Laura Albanese	4972
Hon. Helena Jaczek	4972
Mr. Jagmeet Singh	4973
Mr. Bas Balkissoon	4973

Electoral reform

Motion agreed to	4974
------------------------	------

Ending Predatory Electricity Retailing Act, 2015, Bill 111, Ms. Campbell / Loi de 2015 sur l'élimination des prix abusifs dans la vente au détail d'électricité, projet de loi 111, Mme Campbell

Second reading agreed to	4975
--------------------------------	------

Listening to Ontarians Act (Hydro One and Other Electricity Assets), 2015, Bill 107, Ms. Horwath / Loi de 2015 sur la nécessité d'être à l'écoute des Ontariens (Hydro One et autres éléments d'actif liés à l'électricité), projet de loi 107, Mme Horwath

Second reading negated	4975
------------------------------	------

Consideration of Bill 81

Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4975
Motion agreed to	4975

Intergenerational Day Canada Act, 2015, Bill 81, Mr. Tabuns / Loi de 2015 sur la Journée intergénérationnelle au Canada, projet de loi 81, M. Tabuns

Second reading agreed to	4975
--------------------------------	------

Intergenerational Day Canada Act, 2015, Bill 81, Mr. Tabuns / Loi de 2015 sur la Journée intergénérationnelle au Canada, projet de loi 81, M. Tabuns

Third reading agreed to	4976
-------------------------------	------

Royal assent / Sanction royale

Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell (Lieutenant Governor)	4976
--	------

CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Thursday 4 June 2015 / Jeudi 4 juin 2015

Annual report, French Language Services Commissioner	
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	4921
Members' expenditures	
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	4921

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Order of business	
Hon. Jeff Leal.....	4921
Motion agreed to	4921
Ottawa School Day Nursery Inc. Act, 2014, Bill Pr14, Mr. Fraser	
Second reading agreed to	4921
Third reading agreed to	4921
DSPT International (Canada) Inc. Act, 2015, Bill Pr15, Mr. Colle	
Second reading agreed to	4921
Third reading agreed to	4922
990046 Ontario Inc. Act, 2015, Bill Pr16, Mr. Natyshak	
Second reading agreed to	4922
Third reading agreed to	4922
731149 Ontario Limited Act, 2015, Bill Pr17, Mr. Bailey	
Second reading agreed to	4922
Third reading agreed to	4922
Centre for International Governance Innovation Act (Tax Relief), 2015, Bill Pr18, Ms. Fife	
Second reading agreed to	4922
Third reading agreed to	4922
Supply Chain Management Association Ontario Act, 2015, Bill Pr19, Mr. Rinaldi	
Second reading agreed to	4922
Third reading agreed to	4922
Niagara Central Dorothy Runge Airport Act, 2015, Bill Pr20, Mr. Hudak	
Second reading agreed to	4923
Third reading agreed to	4923
Weiche Estates Inc Act, 2015, Bill Pr21, Mrs. McGarry	
Second reading agreed to	4923
Third reading agreed to	4923
1476263 Ontario Inc. Act, 2015, Bill Pr22, Mr. Hudak	
Second reading agreed to	4923
Third reading agreed to	4923

Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015, Bill 66, Mr. Murray / Loi de 2015 sur la protection des Grands Lacs, projet de loi 66, M. Murray	
Mr. John Vanthof	4923
Hon. Liz Sandals	4926
Mr. Jim McDonell	4926
Mme France Gélinas	4926
Ms. Sophie Kiwala	4927
Mr. John Vanthof	4927
Second reading vote deferred	4927
Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015, Bill 73, Mr. McMeekin / Loi de 2015 pour une croissance intelligente de nos collectivités, projet de loi 73, M. McMeekin	
Mr. Michael Harris.....	4927
Second reading debate deemed adjourned	4930

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Hon. Mario Sergio, Mrs. Lisa Gretzky, Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn, Mr. Victor Fedeli, Mr. Paul Miller, Hon. Helena Jacek, M. Gilles Bisson, Mr. Chris Ballard, Miss Monique Taylor, Hon. David Oraziotti	4930
Hon. Deborah Matthews, Mr. Granville Anderson, Ms. Jennifer K. French, Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde, Mr. Gilles Bisson, Mr. Norm Miller, Hon. Michael Gravelle, Mr. Arthur Potts, Mr. Chris Ballard, Hon. Bill Mauro, M. Grant Crack, M. Bob Delaney, The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	4931

ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

Ontario budget	
Mr. Jim Wilson.....	4931
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4931
Smart meters	
Mr. John Yakabuski	4932
Hon. Bob Chiarelli	4932
Privatization of public assets	
Ms. Andrea Horwath	4933
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4933
Hon. Charles Sousa	4933
Privatization of public assets	
Ms. Andrea Horwath	4933
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4934
Hon. Charles Sousa	4934
Teachers' labour disputes	
Mr. Garfield Dunlop.....	4934
Hon. Liz Sandals	4935

Continued on inside back cover

